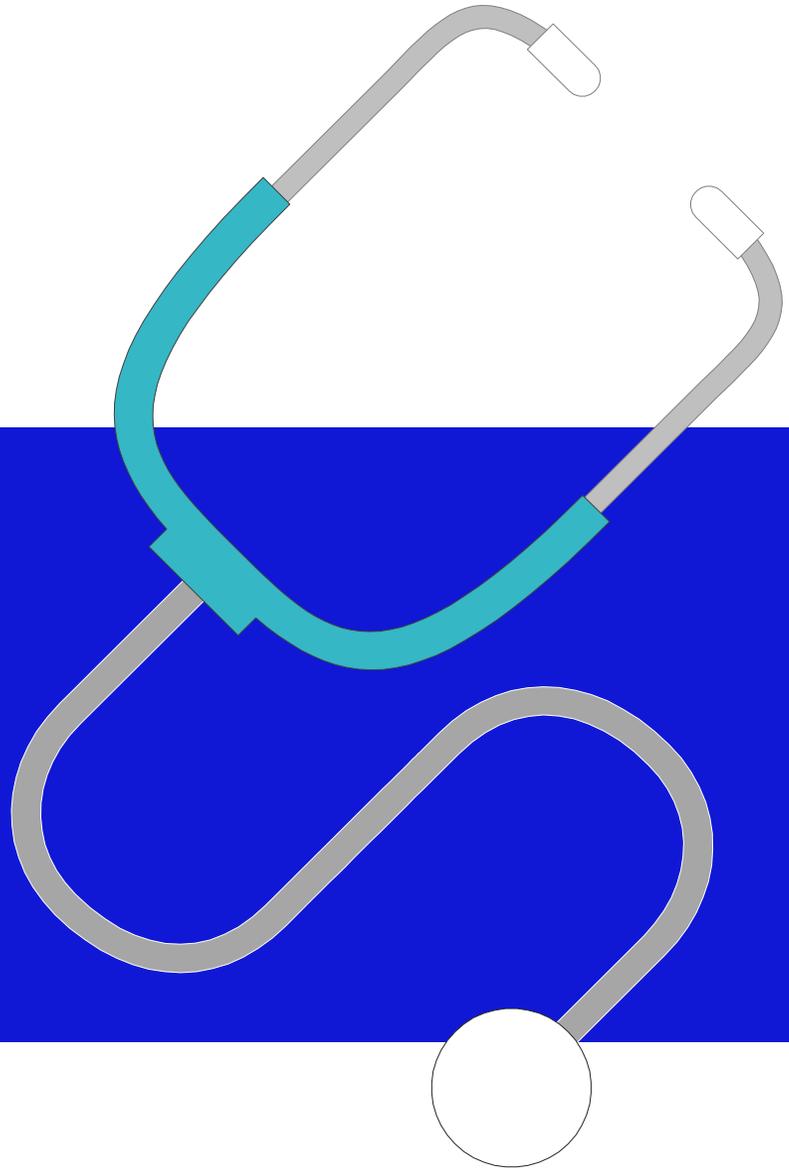




Chapelgreen Practice Case Study





Chapelgreen Practice

Chapelgreen Practice is one of the largest non-university practices in Sheffield with over 15,000 patients, operating over 2 sites. They have 10 GP partners, 2 salaried GPs, 8 practice nurses and a large administrative team; and as a training practice they have up to 8 trainees at any one time.

They were seeing constant increases to their call volumes, even though their patient numbers weren't increasing, and also so that the call duration to the receptionist was increasing by about a third.

They were looking to use online consultation as part of a tiered approach and around the same time they implemented Doctorlink, they also started operating a contact centre where they moved most of their call handling to one site.

What where they looking to achieve

- A key outcome they wanted was to see a reduction in unnecessary calls to the reception team that could be diverted elsewhere.
- Improve patient access to appointment booking, especially for those who couldn't call during normal operating hours.



What happened when Doctorlink was implemented?

Chapelgreen went live with Doctorlink in August 2019, and to encourage patient registrations they did a mixture of text drives, leaflets attached to prescriptions, website messaging and a voice message on their phone system. They also recorded videos discussing the benefits of online services and access, which they shared on social media.

“In the first winter after we launched Doctorlink, we had a number of receptionist staff off sick. However, in that December we had also done a promotional drive to increase patient registrations, so even with depleted receptionist numbers we didn’t feel the impact of that as we had Doctorlink working. We saw a real benefit that first winter.” Blake Foster, Practice Manager.

Pre-COVID 19 the phone system was set up so that anyone who contacted the practice were put onto a triage list, to be triaged by a nurse before being contacted and either put into a face to face appointment with a GP or a call-back by the duty doctor. Chapelgreen saw Doctorlink becoming part of this triage process, with patients who completed a symptom assessment going straight into face to face appointments.

After the first lockdown, Chapelgreen made the decision not to re-introduce nurse triage, and to instead rely on Doctorlink to do the triage for them. And Doctorlink has allowed patients to be able to book straight in call back slots with GPs.

Chapelgreen currently has about a third of their patients registered to use Doctorlink.



Patient Usage and Feedback

The patient feedback has been largely positive, redirecting the right patients as they now need to go through the online triage process and complete a symptom assessment.

“When Doctorlink first went live, members of their Patient Participation Group used the app and found that they were getting the right advice. One user in particular was told to take her husband to hospital, following an assessment, which was the right place for him” recalls Blake Foster, Practice Manager. “We’ve also seen a good amount of usage outside of core hours, which is surprising to see, it’s not just people who are going onto Doctorlink because they can’t get through on the phone, they’re going on at their convenience which I think is very positive.”

4000+
patient
registrations

2800+
symptom
assessments
completed

29%
patients routed
to alternative
care options

GP and admin
saving equivalent
to more than:
£24,000*

*Based on NHS cost of GP appointments: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2019/01/missed-gp-appointments-costing-nhs-millions/#:~:text=Each%20appointment%20costs%20an%20average,of%202%2C325%20full%20time%20GPs>



Testimonials

“Due to COVID 19, contacting GPs has been mainly through phones for everyone, making it a very time-consuming way of accessing healthcare. Online consultations offer an easy and effective alternative, enabling patients to communicate with their doctors in a stress-free manner, saving valuable time”

Dr Sujith Abraham

“Online triage is assisting in reducing the ever-growing burden on general practice. It is alleviating pressures on the phone lines and navigating patients efficiently and effectively to the right care”

Dr Noreen Ahmed

Key Milestones

