

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 21-343	14 th September 2021
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1. How many registered GP practices are there in your Local Health Board area, in August 2021?

72.

2. Of these practices, how many are fully open for face-to-face appointments, in August 2021?

All practices are offering face to face appointments. However, it is a mixture of both virtual and face to face rather than fully face to face.

In response to the pandemic, Welsh Government announced a range of measures to be undertaken to ensure that GP practices were able to continue to provide care safely and support to the most vulnerable people in our communities and support the expected increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19.

One of the first measures was that GP practices were asked to implement the 'telephone-first' model. This meant that all patient contacts were triaged, clinically assessed by phone and only offered a face to face examination when required, subject to clinical judgment and patient needs. The rationale for this approach was to minimize the risk to patients and staff of Covid transmission, as was the case in other health care settings.

This direction from Welsh Government is still in place, with a continuing emphasis on telephone first. Many practices have adopted a blended approach offering increased numbers of face to face consultations alongside remote consultations as appropriate.

3. Of these practices, how many are still running online and telephone appointments?

Practices have adopted a blended approach in respect of the way they offer consultations, although this is still heavily weighted towards *telephone first* as per the Welsh Government direction.

Practices are allowing patients to book appointments or make requests/queries to the practice by email, My Health On-line (MHOL), telephone, prescription box, E-consult and by walking in. This does vary from practice to practice. There is approximately a 25% split for face to face consultations with GPs against 75% remote consultations across the ABUHB area, although face to face is increasing.

4. If possible, of these practices, how many are using telephone triage to assess patients before making an appointment?

22 practices currently operate total triage

11 practices offer triage for just GP and/or ANP appointments (as at end of June 2021).

5. If possible, the average time patients are waiting for a face-to-face appointment with their GP in August 2021?

This will vary from practice to practice, and the detail will be held at practice level. Many practices are offering pre-bookable appointments with the GP/ANP, some of these are face to face although largely via telephone. Other practices are offering a mixture of on the day appointments, appointments within 48 hours or pre-bookable 2 weeks in advance with a GP/ANP whilst some practices are offering all book on the day with pre-bookable only at the request of the clinician.

Practices have confirmed that all urgent requests are dealt with on the same day (June 2021).