

Care Navigation



Our receptionists are here to help you get to the right service.

Please don't be offended if they ask what the problem is when you call to make an appointment

The receptionist might suggest other professionals that could help you better such as:

Opticians

Community Pharmacist

Nurse

Physiotherapist

Visit our practice website to find out more about the full range of services available locally

What is Care Navigation?

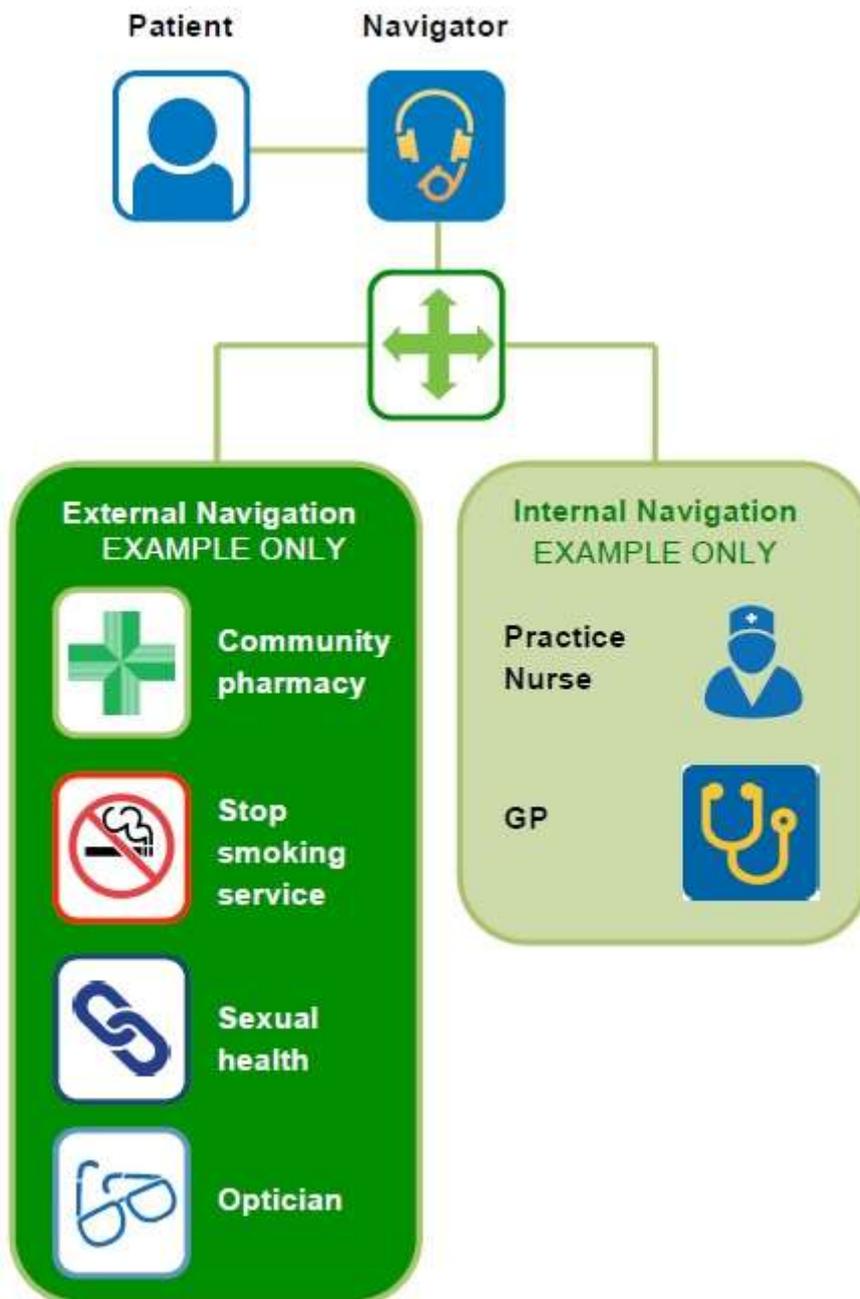
Care Navigation offers individuals choice by providing information to help them move through health and social care services and access the support that is right for them. This will help patients to see the right person, to provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time as efficiently as possible.

Why use Care Navigation?

- To improve access to health and social care
- To release doctors time to care for patients with long term conditions or complex needs
- To improve the service provided by frontline staff in health services

How does it work?

- If you contact your practice you will speak to a receptionist
- These receptionists will have been trained to provide Care Navigation locally
- The receptionists will ask for a brief outline of why you're contacting them and will be able to offer potential choices regarding appropriate services
- But it's YOUR choice, you can still request to see your GP if you wish
- You may be provided with a choice in relation to an appropriate member of staff you can see within the practice
- The choice may also involve an alternative service which can meet your needs e.g. community pharmacy, stopping smoking or sexual health
- This is not clinical advice or triage
- You do not have to accept the choice provided by the receptionist



Care Navigation Frequently Asked Questions

What is Care Navigation?

Care Navigation offers individuals choice by providing information to help them move through health and social care services and access the support that is right for them.

Care Navigation involves members of our GP practice teams being trained to support patients by signposting them to the most appropriate professional or service. This is being implemented to help patients ensure they receive the right care, first time and as

efficiently as possible. This includes signposting you to a person or service within the practice as well as other NHS organisations, social care and in the community.

Care Navigation does not prevent you from seeing your GP and will only be offered in cases where the reason for an individual contacting the practice relates to one of the identified 'pathways' listed below:

- Community Pharmacy
- Minor Eye Conditions and Treatment Service (MECATS)
- Physiotherapy
- GP practice services already provided by other members of staff (e.g. Immunisations)

Why are CCGs implementing Primary Care Navigation?

We know that every appointment and contact in the NHS matters. We want to make sure that every patient is able to see the right person to provide them with the right care at the right place and time.

GP practices are very busy and we need to be able to manage this so that appointments are available to you when you need them. Sometimes patients could be seen more appropriately by another member of staff in the practice or somewhere else.

By offering patients the information and choice about where they could receive appropriate support (such as an appointment with a Practice Nurse or at a Community Pharmacy) it can help free up GP appointment time to care for patients who need to be seen by a GP.

Do I have to accept the 'Primary Care Navigation'?

No. Patients will still have the choice of whether to accept what is being offered through Care Navigation in their own practice. A patient can still request to see their GP or another member of practice staff. A note that the offer of 'Care Navigation' was declined will be added to the patient's record as part of our on-going quality and monitoring of the service.

Will it mean patients being put on hold for ages, waiting to be put through to other services?

Following visits to other areas that have already implemented Primary Care Navigation we observed that the telephone system experienced no additional delays in being able to respond to patients' queries.

Other areas have used a recorded message from a GP informing patients that the 'Care Navigator' will ask for a brief description of the problem they are calling about; helps reduce the length of the call. Patients will often think about the reason and give it straight to the Care Navigator when they get through saving valuable seconds. It helps to have easy access to clear information which can be provided to patients to help them choose the most appropriate service.

What skills / training will the 'Care Navigators' have?

Active Signposting training has been made available to all practices in Thurrock to support the staff that will be delivering 'Care Navigation'.

How will information about the appropriateness of Care Navigation signposting be tracked and monitored?

We have worked with the staff in the services included and wider stakeholders as part of the co-design process. This will ensure information is based on up to date details and requirements. The information included has also been directly reviewed by the CCG as part of the development.

What if the Care Navigator is unsure?

The purpose of the staff delivering Care Navigation is to help provide patients with a choice of appropriate services and not clinically triage them. If there is any doubt regarding the suitability of an alternative service or support for a patient then they would be directed to a member of staff within their General Practice in the first instance. The limited number of pathways that patients can be navigated through have been identified as being appropriate through engagement with general practice staff.

What if the receptionist makes the wrong decision?

Care navigators do not make clinical decisions. Based on the information that patients contact the surgery with and are requesting support with, the staff delivering Care Navigation can offer a choice of what is available. The patient can always choose whether to take up the offer that is provided or choose to see their GP if requested.

Do the calls to Primary Care Navigators cost me or the NHS anything?

No, this is part of what is being provided through our local Primary Care (GP practice) services. The staff delivering Care Navigation are the same staff that are already part of the local GP practices teams. There is no charge beyond your normal cost for making a call to your GP practice on their usual number.