

Guide for volunteers Helping someone set up their NHS App

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Scan the QR code to find a printable, step-by-step guide
for the person you are helping



As a volunteer helping someone register for the [NHS App](#), your role is to provide guidance while respecting their privacy and confidentiality.

This guide will help you walk them through the setup process in a community hub, library, or other support setting.

You can help someone register for the NHS App and the online version, the NHS account.

The same log in credentials can be used to access both the NHS App and NHS account through the NHS website.

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Data protection considerations

As a volunteer, you must understand and adhere to key data protection principles:

- **Don't handle devices:** Guide verbally rather than physically handling their devices
- **Never view or handle personal data:** Make sure you don't see passwords or personal medical information
- **Be aware of your surroundings:** Ensure screens aren't visible to others



Safeguarding considerations

As a volunteer helping potentially vulnerable individuals:

- **Verify capacity:** Ensure the person understands what they're doing and can make informed decisions about their NHS account
- **Report concerns:** Always follow your organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures and remember that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- **Avoid coercion:** Never pressure someone into creating an account
- **Maintain boundaries:** Your role is to guide, not to take control of the process

Volunteer support tips and accessibility considerations

- **Don't take or keep notes** containing personal information
- **Respect privacy:** Position yourself so you can guide without seeing sensitive information
- **Allow plenty of time** as the verification process can take several minutes to complete
- **Ensure stable internet connection** before starting
- **Keep leaflets handy:** The NHS App toolkit contains helpful leaflets that users can take home
- **Explain to those with visual impairments** that the NHS App and website are compatible with screen readers
- **Remember that not all users have strong digital literacy or confidence**

After session completion

- **Log out:** Ensure they've logged out properly if using a shared computer
- **Log in again:** Ask them to confirm they're comfortable with the process of logging in to their account at nhs.uk/nhs-app/account or on the NHS App
- **Biometrics:** Check whether those using the App on their own device can set up fingerprint detection or facial recognition to log in to their NHS App, instead of using a password and security code each time
- **Further support:** Remind them they can access help through the App's help function at the top right of the screen or at nhs.uk/nhs-app
- **Do not keep any personal information and documents:** Make sure you have not kept any personal information and check that all personal documents have been collected

Explaining what the NHS account does

Firstly, explain that the NHS account is the online version of the NHS App, where they can access the same services that they could do within the App.

Help them to understand the benefits of having an NHS account:

- Order repeat prescriptions without contacting their GP practice
- View health records, test results, allergies and medications securely
- Access care plans (*if their GP practice supports this*)
- Send and receive messages from their GP practice
- Use NHS 111 online services

Let those concerned with data protection know that once they've set up NHS login, their NHS App/NHS account securely connects to information from their GP practice.

Eligibility requirements

Confirm users are:

- 13 years or older
- Registered with a GP practice in England or the Isle of Man
- Have an email address and phone number



NOTE:

- those aged 13-15yrs will need to contact their GP surgery for access to GP online services before they can use the NHS App.
- those registered at a surgery provided by Defence Medical Services (DMS) cannot currently use the NHS App or NHS account.
- if someone does not have an email address, or shares an email address, you can help them to set up a free account with an email provider.

Explain the need to verify their identity

For full access to the NHS App and all services listed above, explain they need to verify who they are using one of the methods below to connect their account to their GP practice. Without verification, they can only access some services such as NHS service finder and Health A to Z.

NOTE:

If someone has already set up an NHS login and verified their identity to access another NHS service, such as the Patient Access app, they can use the same email and phone number to access the NHS App – they don't need to set up a new NHS login account.



Setting up an NHS account with ID



Acceptable Forms of ID

When helping someone verify their identity for full NHS account access, explain they can use a valid (not expired):

- Passport
- UK driving licence (full or provisional)
- European driving license (full)
- European national identity card
- UK residence card or UK biometric residence permit (BRP)
- UK application registration card (ARC)
- A valid UK entry clearance video a sticker
- CitizenCard

Setting up an account

STEP 1 Download the NHS App

- Guide them to open the App Store (iOS)  or Google Play Store (Android) 
- Search for “NHS App” and install it

Or direct them to the NHS account section on the NHS website: nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/nhs-login

STEP 2 Create an NHS login

- Guide them to enter their email address and continue
- Help them to create a secure password
- Ensure they accept the NHS login terms and conditions
- A security code will be sent to their email - help them to locate and enter this code
- Guide them to enter their mobile phone number
- A security code will be sent to their phone – help them enter this code

STEP 3 Verify Identity

Option A: Using photo ID with face scan

(this must be done on a device with a camera):

- Take a photo of their ID
- Complete an automated face scan to match with the photo ID when prompted
- Help them enter their date of birth
- Help them enter their NHS number OR name and postcode



Option B: Using photo ID with video verification:

- Take a photo of their ID
- Record a short video of the person saying 4 random numbers (or signing 4 numbers in British Sign Language). This can be done using the device's camera, or you can instruct the person to take a video on another device and send it as an attachment using their email – then log in to their email on the computer and add the attached video to set up the account.
- Help them enter their date of birth
- Help them enter their NHS number OR name and postcode

When they have been verified, they will receive an email confirmation of this. If verification check has failed, they will receive a rejection email stating the reason they were not verified.



Setting up an NHS account without ID

If someone doesn't have suitable ID, they can still create an NHS account.

They will need to contact their GP surgery to request an online account.

They should then be provided in a 'Patient Online Details' document from their GP surgery. This is a letter, email or text message with the below 3 pieces of information:

- The **ODS code** of their GP practice (also known as an Organisation Code or Practice ID)
- An **Account ID**
- A **linkage key** or **passphrase**



Note: The linkage key/passphrase expires after 2 weeks.

When they have these details, arrange for them to come back and to bring the details with them, or arrange for them to follow the below instructions:

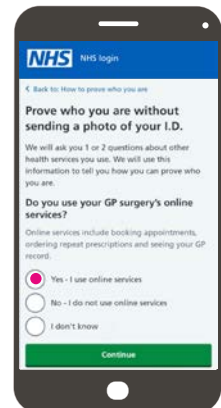
1 Download the **NHS App** or go to the NHS account nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/nhs-login

2 Create an **NHS login** as described on the previous pages (*email, password, verification codes*)

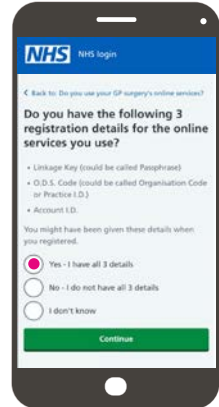
3 During the verification process, select ***“Prove who you are without sending a photo of your I.D.”***



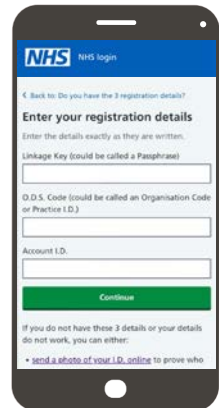
4 Select ***“Yes - I use online services”***



5 Select **“Yes - I have all 3 details”**



- 6** When prompted, enter the:
- Linkage Key or Passphrase
 - ODS code
 - Account ID



7 Enter their full name and date of birth

When to refer someone to a GP practice

If the person faces significant difficulties setting up their NHS account, particularly if:

- They don't have the required ID and require a PIN document for access without ID
- They don't have a postcode and need their NHS number to complete set-up
- They're experiencing technical issues that you can't solve
- They need additional support due to accessibility needs
- They are unsure about any aspect of the registration process

Let them know they can visit their GP practice in person for direct assistance or call their practice to request the necessary registration details.

Get help with the NHS App

For further support...

- Ask at your local library
- Call Age UK East London on **0208 981 7124** for remote and in-person digital inclusion services
- Ask your GP surgery if they offer NHS App support
- Scan the QR code to find local digital inclusion services:

