Consultant Connect
Secondary Care User Guide

Enhanced Advice & Guidance
via Consultant Connect

This pack is designed to provide you with all the information you need to get the most from the Consultant Connect service.

Contents

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Introduction to Consultant Connect

Consultant Connect is a telemedicine provider transforming patient care in the NHS through better communications.

Consultant Connect is Enhanced Advice & Guidance, connecting clinicians-to-clinicians via three main types of communication channels:

- Telephone
- Photo
- Messaging

The Consultant Connect App

Secondary Care clinicians in participating NHS areas can use the free Consultant Connect App, regardless of whether they answer Advice & Guidance calls or not. The Consultant Connect App enables Secondary Care clinicians to:

- Make phone calls to other clinicians across their hospital, to local GP practices or other healthcare professionals in the community
- Send secure messages
- Take secure clinical photos
- Access activity data

Advice & Guidance

Consultant Connect routes Advice & Guidance calls from Primary Care clinicians to Secondary Care clinicians either through existing or new channels.

By having rapid and direct access to specialist advice, clinicians can ensure that patients get the right care, faster. Consultant Connect is IG secure and GDPR compliant. Each Consultant Connect project has a dedicated Account Manager to support users where needed.

Insightful data

When Consultant Connect is used, insightful data is collected and can be downloaded by teams, such as logs of Telephone Advice & Guidance sought and given and call recordings for medico-legal purposes.

Answering Consultant Connect Advice & Guidance calls.

Secondary Care specialists joining the Consultant Connect service to provide Telephone Advice & Guidance don't need to sign up – it's as simple as answering a telephone call. Often specialty managers will speak to their Account Manager at Consultant Connect to create a call answering rota.

Alternatively, Secondary Care clinical teams can set their own **rota consisting** of one or more telephone lines to answer Advice & Guidance calls from Primary Care Clinicians. On average, specialists on the rota can expect 2 to 3 calls each week, lasting about 4 minutes.

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Telephone Advice & Guidance

Responding to Advice & Guidance calls

All calls via Consultant Connect will arrive from a single inbound number: **01865 922021** – this means personal numbers are never disclosed to other clinicians.

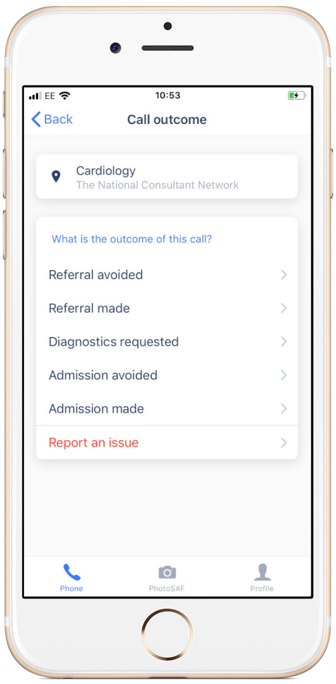
We recommend that specialists add 01865 922021 to their phone contacts as 'Consultant Connect Primary Care Clinician call'

When answering a Primary Care Clinician call via Consultant Connect, an automated message will prompt specialists to press "1" to speak to the clinician. If specialists are unavailable when a Primary Care Clinician calls, the system will automatically connect to the next person on the rota rather than sending the caller to voicemail.

The Primary Care Clinician seeking advice remains responsible for deciding what treatment is to be provided following receipt of the Advice & Guidance. They decide whether a referral or admission is appropriate for their patient or not.

Leaving an outcome

At the end of each call, the system will ask the caller to leave an outcome of the call, (e.g. 'Referral Avoided', 'Admission Made'). The caller is always the first person to be asked to leave an outcome; however if they do not do so, the responder is asked to leave an outcome.



Why this is important for everyone:

- It enables you to track the patient pathway.
- It's an important way to secure the future of the service - your commissioning organisation uses the data to measure effectiveness, which can allow them to add more specialties in the future.

*Please note that available outcomes may differ by NHS area.

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The Consultant Connect Dashboard

The Consultant Connect Dashboard can be used to view your Consultant Connect activity (calls, photos, messages). NHS hospital teams, service managers and admin staff can also be granted access to this feature, so that they can access reports.

The Consultant Connect Dashboard allows you to:

- Update the specialist call answering rota
- Securely store and/or share photos and files
- Send secure messages and/or photos and files with other specialists for Advice & Guidance
- Access your calls log and call recordings (please note: only authorised users can access PID call recordings and download them to the patient records)
- Access your photos log
- Access your messages log

Access the Dashboard by signing in using the same details you use for the app.

To request additional staff access to reporting, please contact support@consultantconnect.org.uk

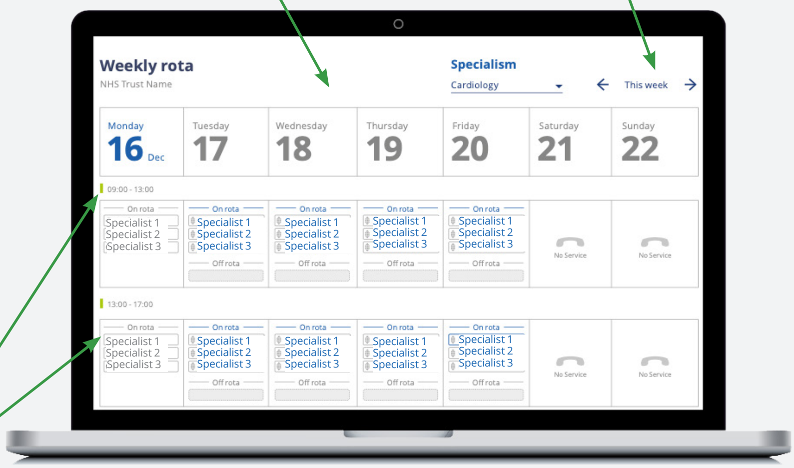
Specialist Rota Overview

Specialist rotas can be edited per day, week and session.

This overview is designed to show specialists how easy it is to view and edit the rotas they are on. Other staff such as Medical Secretaries, Personal Assistants or service managers are given access to the system to edit the rotas on behalf of specialists.

Click here to view a drop-down of all specialist teams answering Advice & Guidance calls at your trust.

Click the arrows to see previous/upcoming rotas for the specialty team selected.



View names of the specialists on/off the rota for each session for the week and specialty selected.

Specialists can expect to receive calls only on the day(s)/session(s) when they are on the rota.

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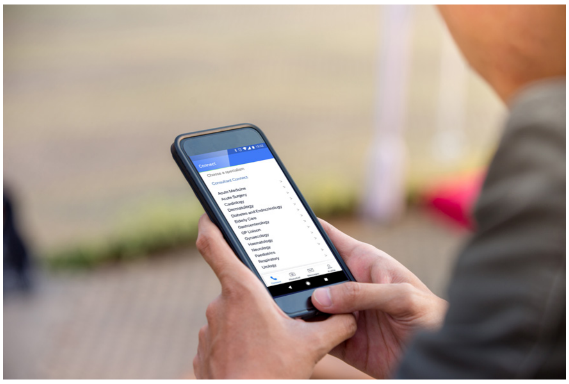
Quick service summary - access options and features

Feature	Access options	
	Consultant Connect App	Consultant Connect Dashboard
Answer Telephone Advice & Guidance calls	Y	N/A
Respond to Messaging Advice & Guidance requests	Y	Y
Send secure messages and photos directly to other clinician colleagues	Y	Y
Create and adjust the specialist call answering rota	N/A	Y
Take IG secure clinical photos (photos are saved in a secure cloud not on your phone)	Y	N/A
Securely upload and send files sent to you by clinician colleagues	N/A	Y
View your activity, calls and messages reports, and profile settings	Y	Y
Use the 'Call back' feature to make a telephone call to the clinician seeking advice or other clinician on the message thread	Y	Y
Access your call recordings (authorised users only)	N/A	Y
Virtual Consultations (Patient Connect)	N/A	Y
Patient Initiated Follow Ups (PIFU)	Y	N/A



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The Consultant Connect App

Secondary Care clinicians in participating NHS areas can use the free Consultant Connect App, regardless of whether they answer Advice & Guidance calls or not.

Open your camera feature on your mobile phone and scan the QR code below. You will be redirected to the relevant app store, from which you can download the Consultant Connect App.

Alternatively, you can search for 'Consultant Connect' on the App Store or Google Play on your mobile phone.

Once you have the app you can create an account or, if you already have one, log in.

If you work for multiple organisations, please email us, and we will add your other places of work to your profile.

You can also create an account from your browser on your computer. You will then be able to use the same credentials to download and start using the free Consultant Connect App from your mobile phone.

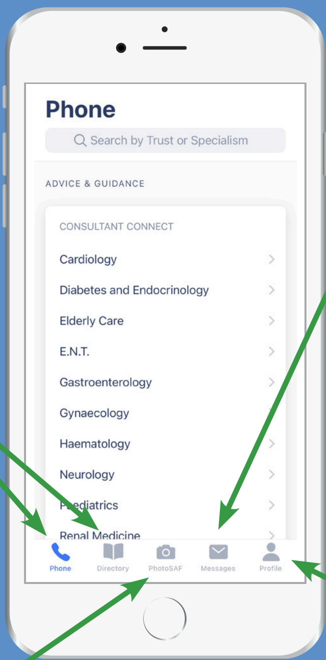
Easy to make phone calls

- Across your hospital
- To other healthcare professionals
- To GP practices
- Via bypass numbers to call back GP practices avoiding switchboard queues
- The app is your pre-programmed phone directory
- All calls are recorded for medico-legal purposes

Simple to send secure messages

In areas where this feature is enabled:

- Send instant messages and photos directly to other clinician colleagues
- Easy to view message history, for group or clinician-to-clinician conversations
- Communication between Multidisciplinary teams can be set up



Quick to take secure clinical photos

Images are:

- Stored in an IG secure cloud
- Not stored on your phone
- Sent to your NHS email address with a PDF summary

Rapid access to activity/data

- For individual/department analysis
- View activity logs of Calls and Messages

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Please note available specialties will differ by hospital and/or locality.

To find out more about settings and features of the service, watch our videos.

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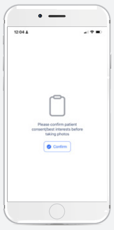
PhotoSAF feature on the Consultant Connect App

You can use the PhotoSAF feature on the Consultant Connect App to take clinical photos. Photos are saved to the secure Consultant Connect Dashboard and never stored on phones.

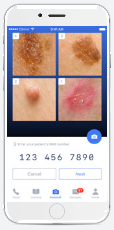
After taking clinical photos via PhotoSAF, you can:

- Access them via the secure cloud, download them and share them with your team or other specialty teams if required.
- Access them via the secure cloud, download them and add them to the patient's record.

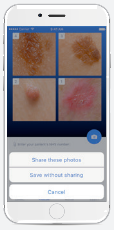
How to use PhotoSAF:



Log in to the app, tap PhotoSAF at the bottom of the screen, confirm your patient's consent and take photo(s).

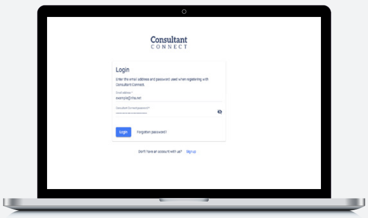


Add NHS # and notes.

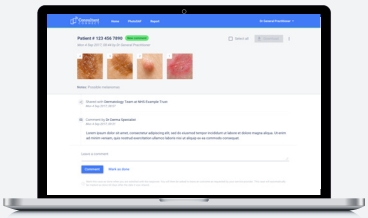


Select 'Save these photos'.

Photos and notes are automatically sent to your NHS email address and are also available from the secure Consultant Connect Dashboard.



To download your photos, log in to the dashboard via your computer, using the same email address and password you use for the app. Click on the 'Photos' tab in the menu bar.



Click the 'Download photos' button to export the photos to a secure file location on your computer.

Once downloaded to a secure file location, you can attach the photos to the patient's record if required.

Watch this short explainer video about using PhotoSAF

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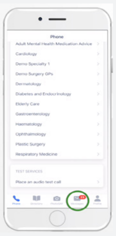
Responding to Messaging Advice & Guidance requests

Clinicians use Messaging for group or clinician-to-clinician pre-referral advice or internal communication. Messaging can be accessed via the Consultant Connect App or Dashboard. Photos and files can also be attached to messages.

If you are part of a specialty team responding to Messaging requests, you will be notified when a new photo message advice request comes through and will receive an in-app push notification and an email informing you of a new request or if an additional photo and/or message has been added to an existing case. How you are notified of a new request will depend on your user settings.

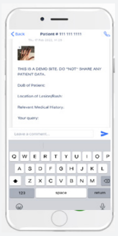
There are two secure ways for you and your team to review queries sent by other clinicians. You can do this either via the Consultant Connect App on your phone or via the Consultant Connect Dashboard using your computer's web browser.

Via the Consultant Connect App



Open the Consultant Connect App and tap 'Messages'.

A red dot on the icon will show you that you have an unread message.



Type your advice or ask further questions.

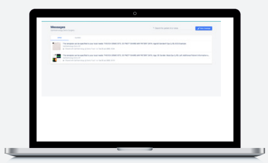
If needed, other clinicians in your specialty team can reply to the message thread, allowing for shared responsibility of the query.

Once the query has been resolved, you or the Primary Care clinician can close the case and leave an outcome.

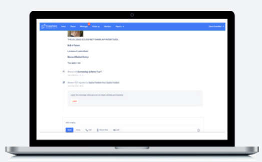
The conversation is securely saved.

The message(s) and photo(s) can be downloaded via the Consultant Connect Dashboard.

Via the Consultant Connect Dashboard



Log in to the dashboard using the same details you use for the Consultant Connect App and click on the 'Messages' tab on the menu bar at the top of the screen. There will be a red dot indicating there is an unread message.



Type your advice or ask further questions.
If needed, other clinicians in your specialty team can reply to the message thread, allowing for shared responsibility of the query.

Once the query has been resolved, you or the Primary Care clinician can close the case and leave an outcome.

The conversation is securely saved.

The message(s) and photo(s) can be downloaded via the Consultant Connect Dashboard.

Watch this short explainer video about Responding to Photo Messaging Advice & Guidance requests.

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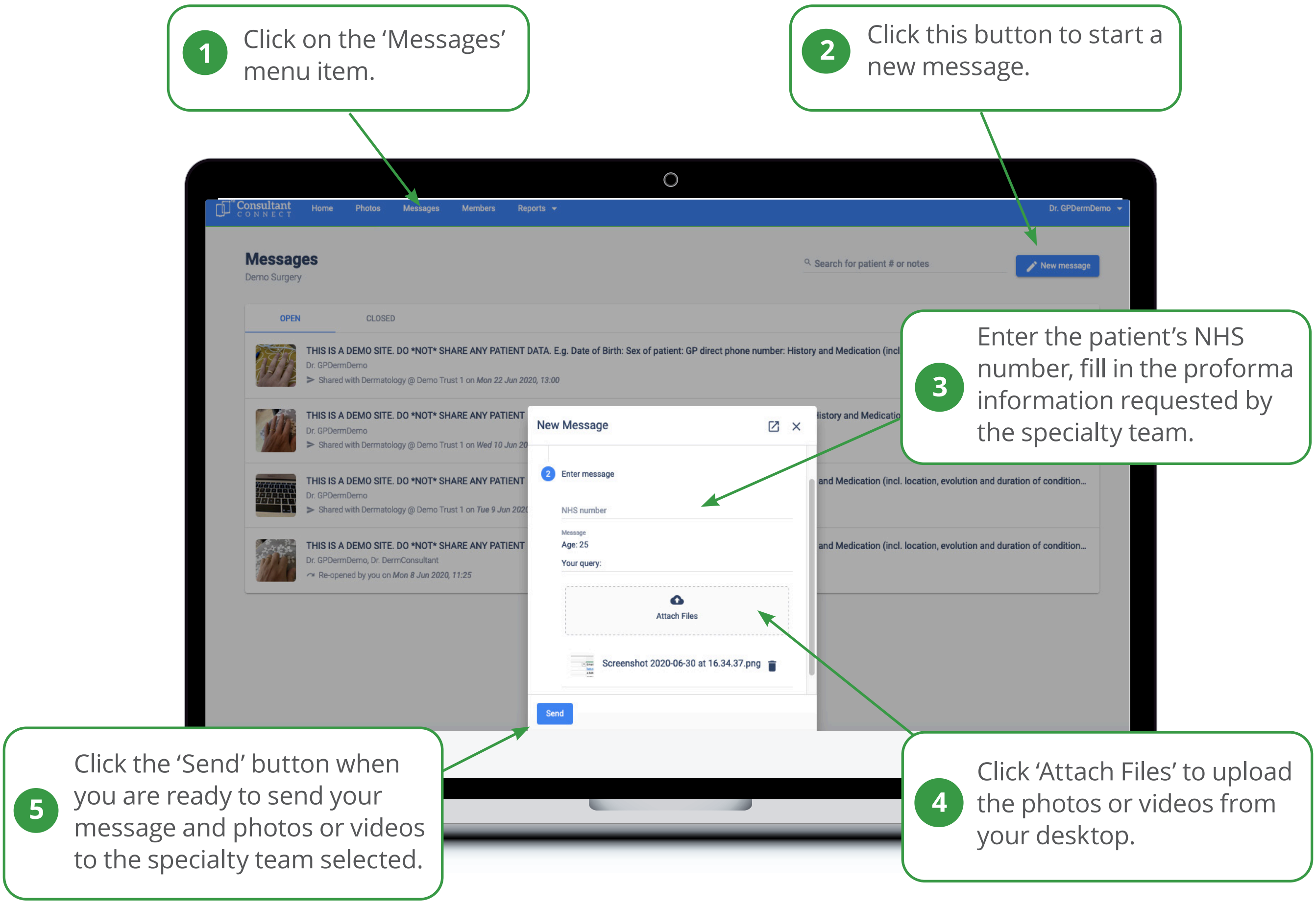
Using the Consultant Connect Dashboard to securely upload and send files

The Consultant Connect Dashboard can be set up to enable you to send IG compliant Messages, images and short videos either to your team or other clinical teams.
If you would like to set this up please contact your Account Manager at Consultant Connect.

Once set up, if your clinical colleagues have sent you images or short videos of patient conditions, you can use the Consultant Connect Dashboard to securely upload and share these images with your team if required.

Log into the [Consultant Connect Dashboard](#) from your computer and follow the simple steps illustrated on the diagram below.



Maximum file size

Please note that when uploading files and sending them the maximum size per file is 50MB.

Accepted file types:

- Most image, video, audio and text files
- PDF and Office files
- DICOM scans

[Watch this short explainer video about uploading photos/files via the dashboard](#)

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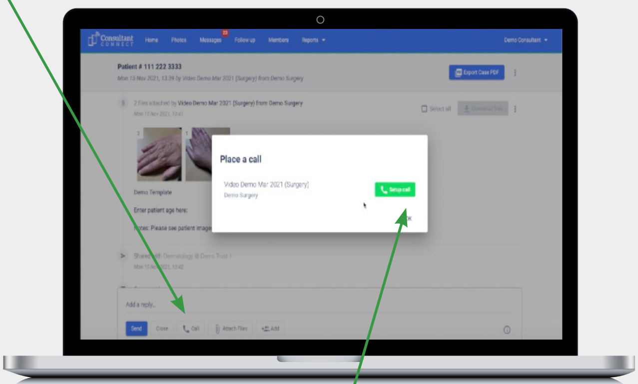
'Call back' feature

Clinicians can use the 'Call back' feature to make a rapid telephone call to the clinician seeking advice.
All clinicians who have sent a message on the message thread can be contacted by using the 'Call back' feature.

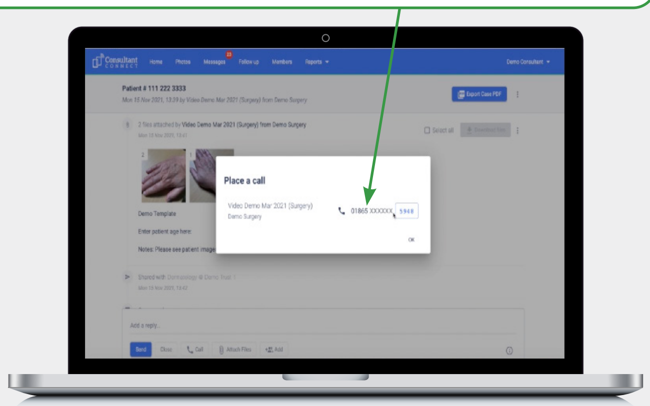
To use the 'Call back' feature via the Consultant Connect Dashboard, log in to your Dashboard and follow the simple steps illustrated below:

1 Click the 'Call' button



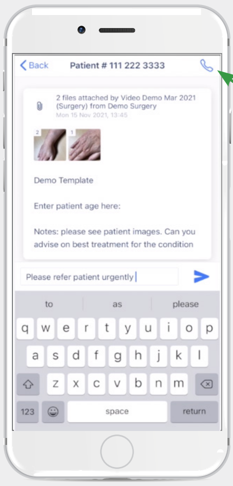
2 Then, click 'Start Call'

3 **Call the telephone number on screen from any phone.** You will hear an automated message asking you to enter the 4 digit code displayed on screen



4 **Speak to the clinician to discuss the patient case.** All calls, including answerphone messages, are recorded and tracked

To use the 'Call back' feature via the Consultant Connect App:



You can also use the 'Call back' feature when using the Consultant Connect App to respond to a Messaging Advice & Guidance query. Simply tap the phone icon on the top right-hand corner of the open message screen to call the clinician directly.

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Patient Initiated Follow Ups (PIFU)

Consultant Connect's Patient Initiated Follow Up Service (PIFU) reduces unnecessary visits to hospital, patient waiting times and releases the clinical teams to see patients in a more timely manner.

There is no doubt that this is the simplest, most effective way of delivering follow-up consultations where the clinician does not need to see the patient.

There are two pathway options available via Consultant Connect:

Option 1: Patient calls, clinician answers

Patient calls local telephone number.

- Call is put through to a 'rota' of on-call clinicians
- If the first clinician is unable to answer, the call moves on to the next

Clinician answers, delivers follow-up consultation

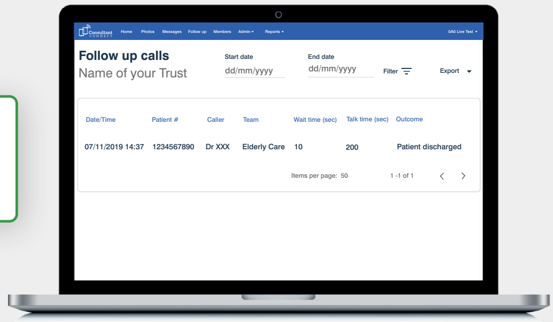
Patient Discharged

Further telephone follow-up consultation is scheduled

Further face-to-face follow-up consultation scheduled

Consultant Connect tracks and records incoming patient calls

- ✓ Medico legal protection
- ✓ Activity log



Option 2: Patient calls, clinician calls back

Patient calls local telephone number.

- Call is put through to the Medical Secretary
- Call back is scheduled

Clinician calls patient back, delivers follow-up consultation

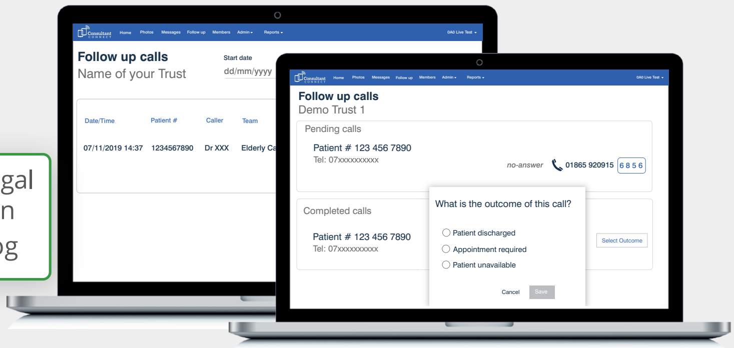
Patient Discharged

Further telephone follow-up consultation is scheduled

Further face-to-face follow-up consultation scheduled

Consultant Connect tracks and records clinician calls to patients, including answerphone messages

- ✓ Medico legal protection
- ✓ Activity log



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E: hello@consultantconnect.org.uk
T: 01865 261467
W: www.consultantconnect.org.uk

Consultant CONNECT

Virtual Consultations (Patient Connect)

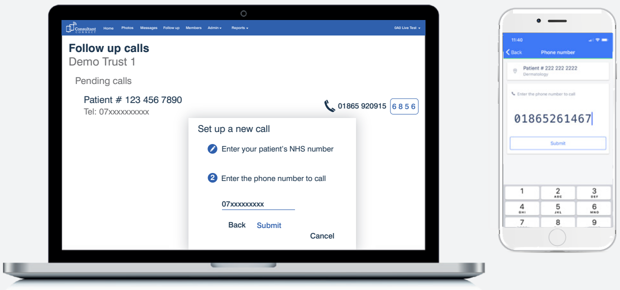
Clinicians use Patient Connect to deliver IG secure virtual consultations via telephone call. All data and call recordings are available via the Consultant Connect Dashboard.

To set up and make a Patient Connect call via telephone, follow the simple steps below:

- If on a computer, **log into the Consultant Connect Dashboard** and select the 'Follow Up' menu item on your screen.
- If on a mobile phone, use the free Consultant Connect App and select the 'Follow Up' menu item on the app.

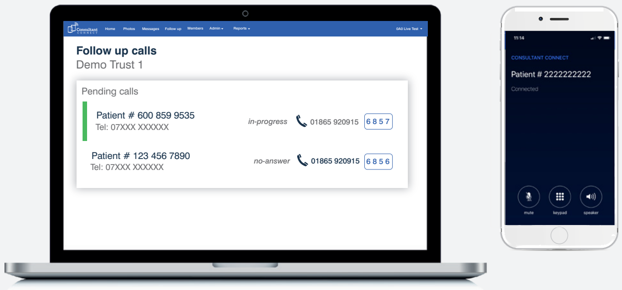
1 Set up the call

Enter the patient's NHS number and telephone number



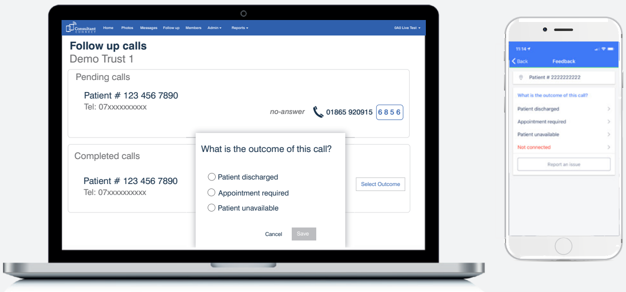
2 Speak to the patient

Through the app or by dialling the unique Dial-In Number and PIN



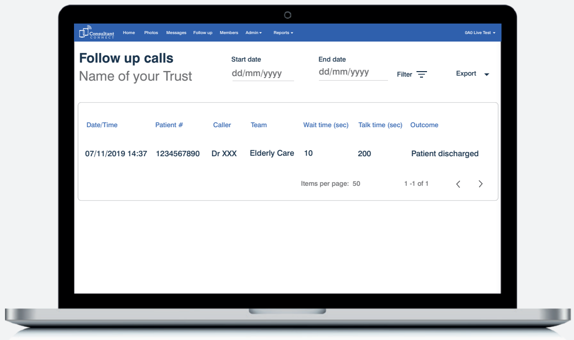
3 Select call outcome

'Patient discharged'
'Appointment required'
'Patient unavailable'



4 Access call reports

All calls, including answerphone messages, are recorded and tracked.



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Telemedicine Devices

State of the art 'virtual presence' devices allow a specialist clinician to deliver critical support to colleagues without being physically at the patient's bedside.

The versatility of the devices allows for them to be effectively deployed over a range of healthcare settings – from neonatology to routine clinics, ensuring that you can maximise the effectiveness of your workforce.

Current examples of usage include large multi-site NHS Trusts, such as University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust (UHL), who have optimised their available clinicians, cut down travel time between sites, reduced emissions and increased patient-facing time – improving chances of earlier discharge.

Devices have also allowed for specialists to assist in the resuscitation of a baby from a different hospital and to assist a cardiac ICU in the care of paediatric cardiology cases, despite there being no ICU on site.

> "The image and sound quality of the system are excellent and allow me to see and talk to the patient, alongside onsite junior doctors, while having all the relevant medical records at hand – something you're not able to do via a phone call. " **Dr Steve Jackson, Consultant, UHL**
>
> "We have actually seen the care for our babies enhanced by the telemedicine system. Busy specialists have been able to be at the baby's cot side within minutes of being contacted, providing their expert opinion and discussing with the families as if they were in the room. "
> **Dr Chris Dewhurst, Clinical Director, Liverpool Neonatal Partnership**

Key Benefits

- Instant access to specialist advice from anywhere in the world
- Enables equity of access to services across a region (e.g. specialist care, mental health)
- Improves patient care through increased specialist-led care
- Mobilises and maximises the efficiency of your workforce
- Increases opportunities for learning from specialists
- Minimal training and set-up required – the single virtual care platform enables all devices to be connected on a universally accessible network for enhanced communication
- Opportunity to provide your services to other regions or countries (e.g. patient consultations in the Middle East)

For case studies, and more information, visit our Telemedicine devices web page.

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Referral Triage

Hospital trust teams can prioritise their waiting list with Referral Triage. The service is for hospital trusts needing additional temporary capacity for referrals.

The service uses the expertise of the NHS consultants from our National Consultant Network (NCN) and is available to work through backlogs in bulk or back-up local clinicians (for backlogs and/or new referrals as they come in).

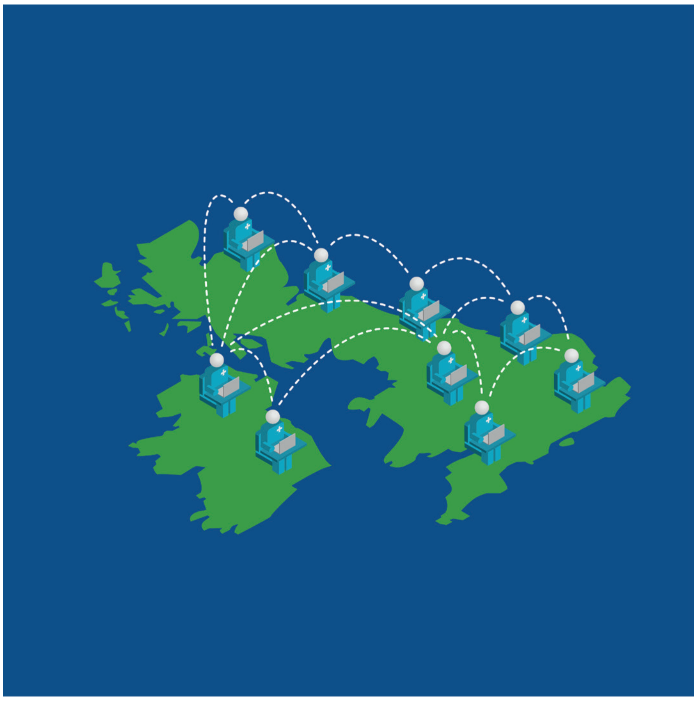
All specialists available are NHS consultants and act as 'virtual' consultants who are working as part of a local team and are briefed to follow local protocols and pathways.

17 Specialties available

- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Diabetes and Endocrinology
- Elderly Care
- E.N.T
- Gastroenterology
- Gynaecology
- Haematology
- Neurology
- Ophthalmology
- Paediatrics
- Renal Medicine
- Respiratory Medicine
- Rheumatology
- Surgery
- Trauma & Orthopaedics
- Urology

Key benefits

- Manages high volumes quickly
- Results in many referrals being re-prioritised
- Identifies important upgrades as well as downgrades
- Directs referrals to the right service first time
- Initiates diagnostics where needed
- Follows local pathways
- Communicates all results via e-RS
- Charged on a per referral basis
- 100% outcome reporting



For more information, view our Referral Triage web page.

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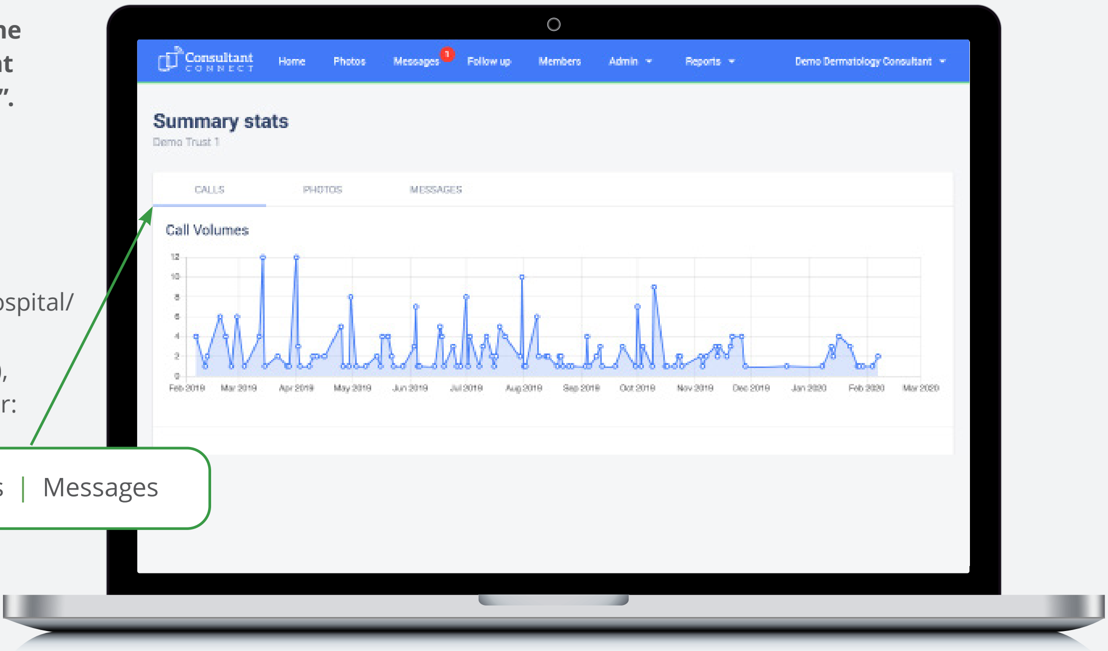
Reports on the Consultant Connect Dashboard

Access your home page

When you log into the dashboard you will see the screen shown on the right which is the "Home page". Here you can:

1. View the summary statistics across all specialties in your hospital/trust (for the last 12 months in your area), including volumes for:

Calls | Photos | Messages



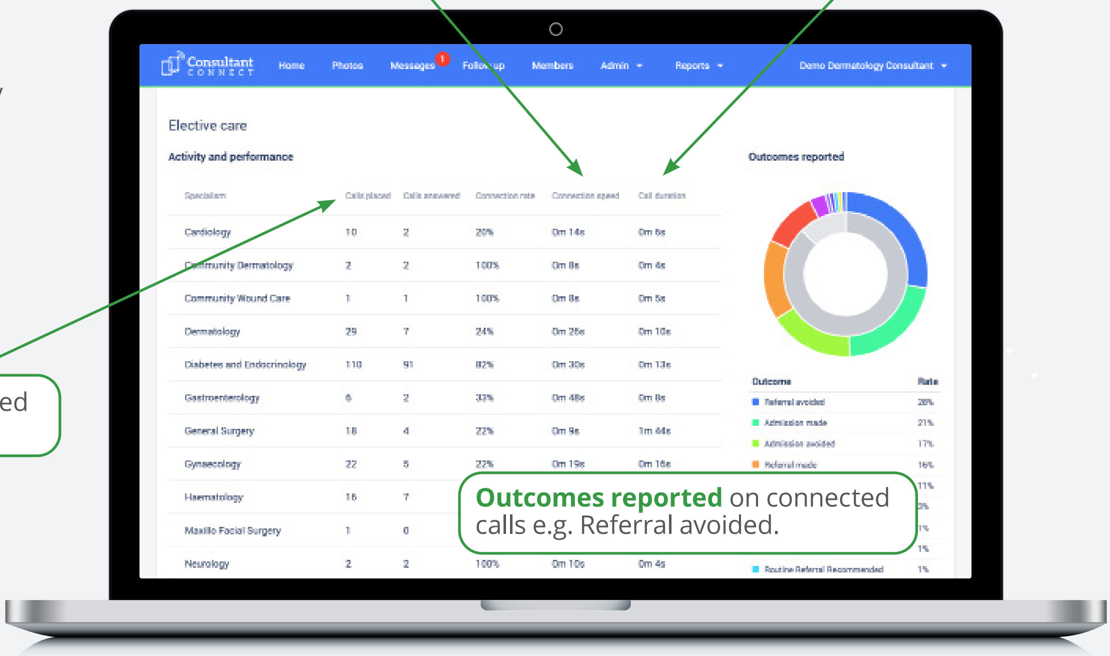
2. If you scroll down your home page, you can view activity and performance statistics for Urgent Care, Elective Care and Mental Health Care specialties* for your hospital/trust, including:

Connection speed (time it takes to answer the Primary Care call – UK average is 27 seconds).

Call duration (UK average is 3.5 minutes).

Number of calls placed and answered.

Outcomes reported on connected calls e.g. Referral avoided.



*Please note specialties available will differ by hospital/trust and/or locality.

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Access your call report

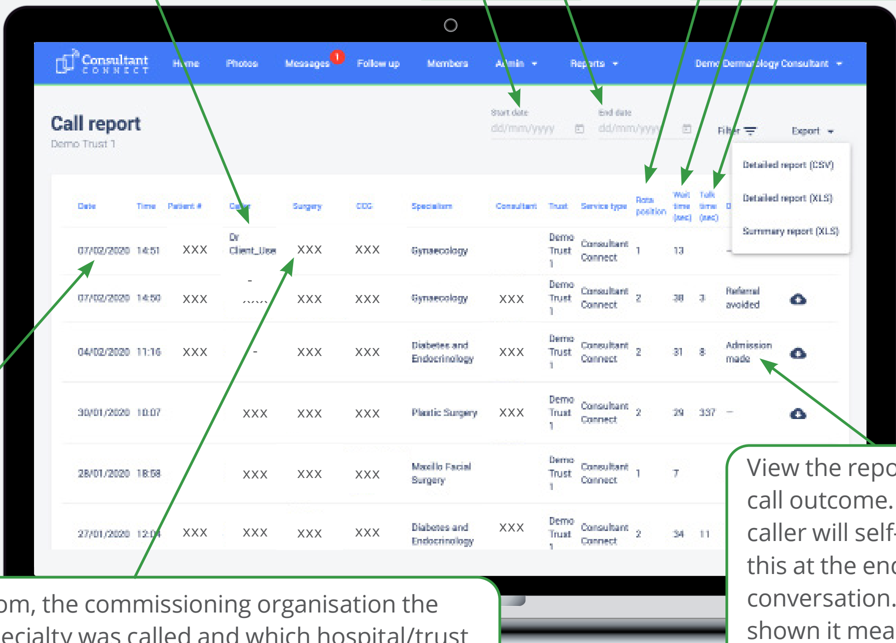
If you click on 'Reports' you will be able to get more detailed information for your own reporting needs.

Use the call report to*:

View the name of the person that made the call if they used the app, if they called from a landline you will see a '–' in this column.

Change date range for call reports here and export report if needed here.

View how many specialists were tried before a call was answered, the wait time before the call was answered, and the length of conversation.



View the date and time the call was made.

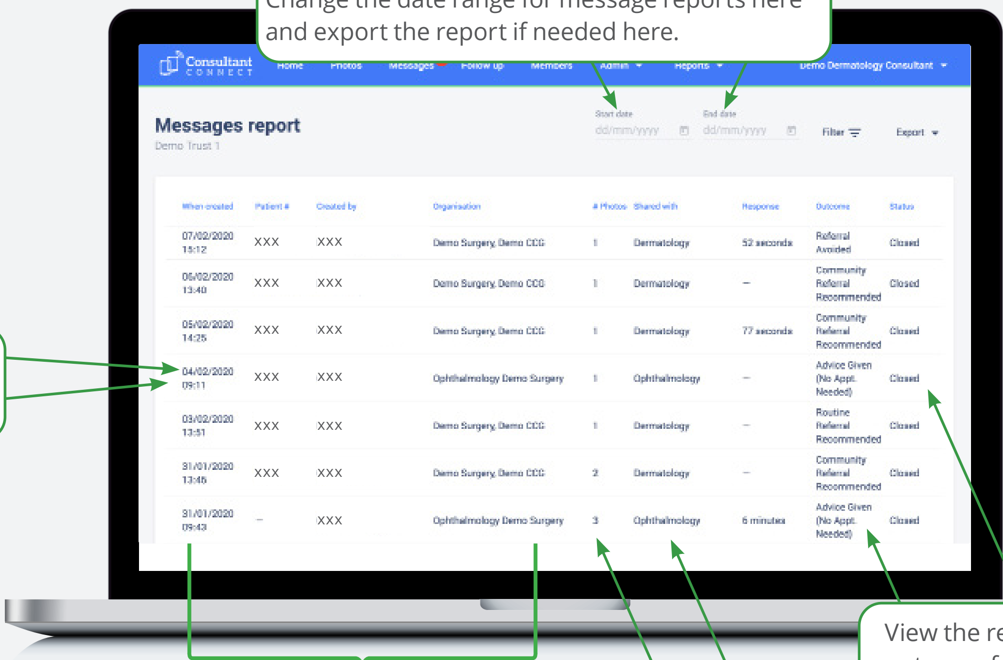
View the surgery the call came from, the commissioning organisation the surgery is connected to, which specialty was called and which hospital/trust answered.

View the reported call outcome. The caller will self-report this at the end of the conversation. If a '–' is shown it means the clinicians did not leave an outcome.

Access your messages report

Use the 'Messages report' to*:

Change the date range for message reports here and export the report if needed here.



View the date and time the Message took place.

View the date for when the first message was sent, who sent it and where they work.

View how many photos were included in the message(s) (if applicable) and which specialty team they shared the message(s) with.

View the reported outcome for closed cases. If the outcome is '–' the case status will still be 'Ongoing'.

*If these features are not enabled, please contact Consultant Connect for more information.

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For Support

[View our short 'How to' videos...](#)

Your Account Manager can answer questions, provide support and a demonstration of how the service works, please email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or call 01865 261467 if you do not have your Account Manager's contact details.

FAQs and Case Studies

For FAQs, please click here.

For Case Studies grouped by user type, please click here.

For Case Studies grouped by specialty, please click here.

If you have any additional questions or need service support from us, please call us on 01865 261 467 or email hello@consultantconnect.org.uk

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