



Remotely Ready:

Advice for Health Professionals about having Telephone or Video Appointments

Telephone and video consultations are slightly different to regular appointments.

This leaflet shares some top tips for remote appointments.

It is informed by research conducted as part of the REFLECT study, and in collaboration with health professionals, children and parents.



Top tip

Be as present as possible

It's best if you're facing the camera, not looking at a separate screen or typing while children or parents talk.

You might want to try to take shorter notes or type more quietly to reduce the noise.



Top tip

Plan your Plan B

Technical issues and delays can happen and can make children and parents feel anxious. If glitches happen, reassure them that it's OK and things will be sorted.

Have your own plan B ready, such as having their telephone number at hand or trying to call again.



Top
tip

A camera the size of a keyhole

Physically examining a child via a screen brings its own challenges. If possible, let families know in advance if you might want to examine their child. This will help them prepare.

Patients' cameras are often immobile and have a narrow field of vision. This means that it can be tricky for them to maintain eye contact and show you the part you want to examine.

In this case, remember to speak slowly, soothe any concerns and ask the parents, or guardians, to assist. You may need to demonstrate or give clear instructions.



Top
tip

Friendly health professionals are not the same as online 'friends'



Although many children and parents use smartphones every day, speaking to you will feel different. Some children might not like being on camera, while others won't mind at all. It is always best to follow their lead.

Try to include the child as much as possible by asking them what questions they have and what they think. Remember, some children will want their parent to do all the talking.

Top
tip

"I'd prefer to be seen at the hospital"

Parents and children might ask why they are not being seen at the hospital.

It is a valid question and they may need reassurance that they can still contact you, or make another appointment if anything changes.



Snap the QR code to watch our short film about about having an appointment on the phone or video.

