



# Appendix A: NHS Health Check Online FAQs

## Purpose

This document is intended to provide local authority public health teams with an update on the development of the NHS Health Check Online and next steps, as well as information to support planning for the future commissioning of NHS Health Checks. These questions have been collated based on feedback received from stakeholders to date.

Your continued involvement and feedback are key to developing an NHS Health Check Online service that works for local systems, commissioners, providers and the eligible population.

Should you have any additional questions, please contact [NHSHealthCheck@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:NHSHealthCheck@dhsc.gov.uk)

Contents .....	1
Purpose .....	1
Background.....	2
Evaluation .....	7
What will NHS Health Check Online mean for local authorities? .....	8
Will local authorities have to pay to use NHS Health Check Online during the private Beta phase? .....	9
What does this mean for GPs/providers? .....	10
How will this work for people eligible for the NHS Health Check?.....	10

# Background

## Why are you developing the NHS Health Check Online?

Government has set a central mission to build a health and care system fit for the future by moving from sickness to prevention, hospital to home and analogue to digital, with the NHS Health Check Online supporting all three shifts.

A review of the programme, published in 2021, found that the NHS Health Check has achieved many of its aims since the programme began in 2009, and millions of eligible people have had their cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk assessed. However, since its inception, the overall national uptake of the NHS Health Check has never exceeded 50%, meaning a large proportion of the eligible population is not reached by the existing programme.

The 2021 review found that the NHS Health Check has the potential to achieve greater impact through use of a digital approach to ‘transform all aspects of the NHS Health Check, including accessibility, scale, conduct and delivery’, and recommended a digital approach to improve participation and engagement in the NHS Health Check. Government funding was then secured to deliver this.

Introducing NHS Health Check Online will give users more choice about where and when to have a check and empower people to take action to improve their health independently. NHS Health Check Online will enable people to self-check at home, only directing people to primary care where further clinical assessment and treatment is required.

As the recently published NAO report 'Progress in preventing cardiovascular disease' has highlighted, we know there is more to be done to improve the impact of the NHS Health Check programme. NHS Health Check Online will contribute to improving impact of the programme and progress towards achieving the health mission ambition to reduce premature mortality from heart disease and stroke by 25% within a decade.

## What are the anticipated benefits of the NHS Health Check Online?

Anticipated benefits of the NHS Health Check Online, that will be tested through piloting and evaluation, include the following:

- By providing people with the choice to complete their NHS Health Check at home, more people will engage in the life-saving programme, and this will also free up capacity in primary care.
- It may attract people who are otherwise reluctant or find it difficult to engage in healthcare settings or who would simply find online checks more convenient.

- It could offer efficiencies for commissioners and providers.
- It could help to overcome local variability in delivery.
- It will provide timely access to data for continuous improvement.
- By identifying and managing more people at risk of CVD earlier we anticipate that the programme will improve health outcomes, reduce inequality, reduce pressure on the NHS, and enable people to remain in work for longer.

## **Development and timescales of the NHS Health Check Online**

### **What has been done so far to develop NHS Health Check Online?**

The NHS Health Check Online has been developed in line with the Government Digital Standards which all government digital services must adhere to ensure digital products are efficient and effective.

Discovery and Alpha phases have been successfully completed, each concluding in a recommendation to move to the next stage. During the Alpha phase, a small-scale pilot was conducted in Cornwall, focusing on in-depth user research and effective development of the product.

The NHS Health Check Online, which is integrated into the NHS App, is currently in the private Beta pilot phase where we have built the product and are testing it with end users with multiple general practices across 3 local authorities (Norfolk, Lambeth and Medway).

To date we have found all processes are working as planned, including sending information back to the GP record (write back) and blood results integration into the app. Following feedback from GP staff in the early testing of the NHS Health Check Online we have streamlined processes for providers by replacing the need for daily report with an automated result flag and have created an implementation toolkit that provides guidance and advice for general practices and LA's. Early feedback from people who have completed NHS Health Check Online has been positive, including that the online instructions and questions are easy to understand and follow.

### **What is NHS Health Check Online?**

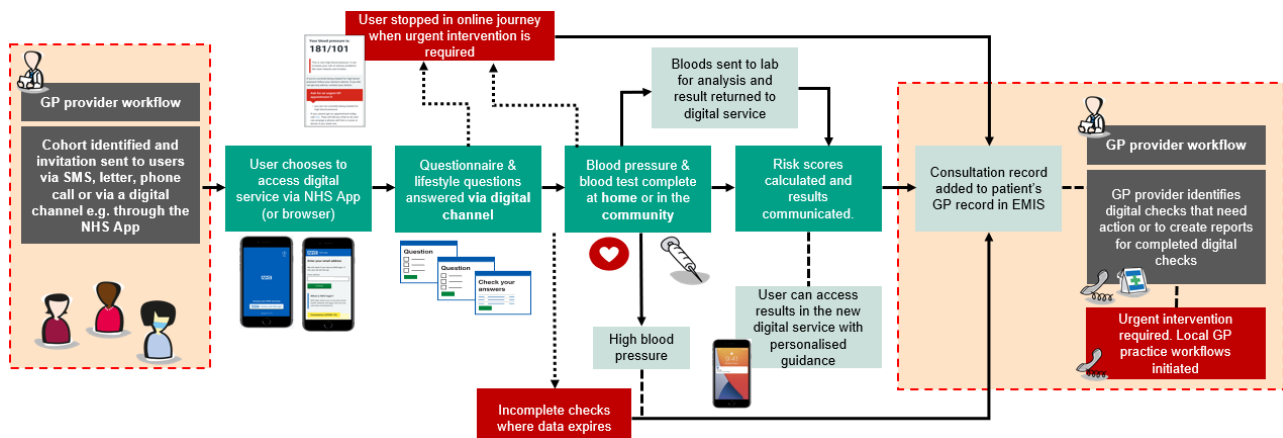
The vision is that NHS Health Check Online will increase the uptake, flexibility and reach of the NHS Health Check by offering an innovative, accessible, inclusive and cost-effective

service to help people engage in their cardiometabolic health. By capitalising on digital engagement during the pandemic, we hope to be able to reach more people by enabling people to self-check at home.

The NHS Health Check Online will meet the existing legal requirements for the NHS Health Check, which covers the following elements:

- Identify eligible population, via existing routes.
- Invite eligible individuals, via existing routes.
- Provide questionnaires and biometrics, including blood pressure (via pharmacy, GP or at home), cholesterol and, if required, blood glucose (HbA1c)
- Communicate results to the end user and their general practitioner.
- Provide personalised advice on actions people can take to reduce their risk of CVD.
- Refer people for clinical follow up and to prevention services.

A high-level user journey can be seen below.



## What are the next steps for the NHS Health Check Online?

Following the limited cohort phase which started in March, the full product has now (June 2025) been released across the 3 private beta pilot local authorities and will run for 6 months until the end of 2025.

This expression of interest (EOI) provides an opportunity for additional local authorities and their GP providers to join the next phase of private Beta following the pilot, prior to scaling more widely in 2026-7 (subject to evaluation). The intention is that the LAs who are

successful in this EOI will begin inviting eligible participants as soon as themselves and GP providers are onboarded, we expect this to take around 3 months.

## **How can I be involved in the next phase of the programme?**

This EOI is looking for up to five additional local authorities to join the next phase which will commence from December 2025. Applications close at 12.00pm on Monday 8th September. Local authorities will be selected and notified in September 2025, and we expect onboarding to take about 3 months, with invites to eligible participants being sent as soon as this is completed.

For further information about the EOI, please visit the [NHS Health Check website](#).

## **How will NHS Health Check Online collect eligible participants' information, including blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose?**

To complete NHS Health Check Online, participants must provide a range of data consistent with the existing in-person check, including:

- Demographic information, including age, sex and ethnicity.
- Behavioural information about CVD risk factors, such as smoking status, alcohol use and physical activity through validated tools.
- Biometric information, including height and weight to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI), blood pressure, cholesterol and, for some people, blood glucose.

The ambition is to allow NHS Health Check Online participants to complete all elements of their check at home or in convenient community locations.

- Demographic and behavioural information is captured in a questionnaire using validated formats and tools in line with the existing in-person service.
- Most people have the means to collect and record their height and weight for BMI at home. Information about the importance of providing accurate height and weight information is presented to users on the NHS Health Check Online platform.
- Those people with access to a blood pressure monitor at home are encouraged to measure their blood pressure at home and record it in on the NHS Health Check Online platform.

- Those without access to a blood pressure monitor at home are directed to community pharmacies offering the free hypertension case-finding advanced service via the [pharmacy finder tool](#), and are required to record their readings in the NHS Health Check Online platform. More than 9,000 pharmacies deliver the case-finding service, and since October 2021, over 2.9 million blood pressure checks have been delivered as part of the service.
- Cholesterol and, if required, blood glucose is tested using an at-home blood sampling kit. Users will be asked to order a blood sampling kit to their chosen address. Once delivered, they should conduct their blood sample collection according to the instructions provided and return the sample to the given address via free postage.

### **Why are you only offering this service to providers using EMIS?**

A key outcome of the NHS Health Check Online is that it is written back in structured form to the patient's GP record for the information of their practice and clinical follow-up if necessary. At present we only support practices running EMIS Web as technical options for write-back to TPP SystemOne are limited. To enable future expansion, we are currently working on a strategic approach for write-back that will work across both EMIS, TPP and the new market entrants. Our aspiration is for this to be available in the next financial year (2026/7).

### **Will LAs receive any support or training to rollout NHS Health Check Online?**

Yes, the rollout of NHS Health Check Online will include support for commissioners and providers through an implementation toolkit which is hosted on the FuturesNHS website. We are currently engaging with commissioners and providers to understand their ongoing support and training requirements and will iterate this throughout the pilot.

### **How is NHS Health Check Online funded?**

Government has centrally invested in the development and maintenance of the NHS Health Check Online product to date. During the pilot phase DHSC, has centrally covered the costs of the blood sampling element of the online check and the ambition is to continue funding this up until March 2026 subject to approvals. From April 2026, LAs will then need draw down from and fund this element of the service using local budgets. We are unable to provide costs per blood test kit at this point in time as we are about to begin the procurement process to set up a national framework. However, we are happy to discuss this issue further with interested LAs.

Findings from the pilot and evaluation of NHS Health Check Online will help to determine the most suitable commissioning and delivery approach for rollout of NHS Health Check Online at scale, acknowledging that there are currently a variety of approaches to commissioning and delivery of NHS Health Checks across different local commissioners. The DHSC will provide guidance on this following the pilot.

## **Evaluation**

### **How will NHS Health Check Online be evaluated?**

The digital application will be governed, monitored and assessed according to the Government Functional Standard for Digital, and accompanying Digital Assessment Framework.

We will also assess the clinical safety of NHS Health Check Online at each phase of development.

A formal independent rapid evaluation of the NHS Health Check Online pilot is being conducted by the DECIDE (Digitally Enabled Care in Diverse Environments) centre for the rapid evaluation of technology-enabled remote monitoring in health and care. The DECIDE centre is funded by the NIHR Health and Social Care Delivery Research (HSDR) programme and is a partnership between the University of Oxford and RAND Europe.

A further summative evaluation is planned but not yet commissioned for later stages of the programme.

### **What are the evaluation objectives?**

The evaluation team aim to examine the development, implementation, and use of NHS Health Checks digitally during the pilot phase to draw timely, transferable lessons that can inform and support the future implementation of the programme. More specifically, the evaluation will seek to:

- Develop a rich picture of the structures and support mechanisms underpinning successful adoption of the NHS Health Check Online service.
- Surface and explore the numerous interacting influences on implementation and identify potential challenges for spread and sustainability.

- Provide an in-depth understanding of staff and service user experience, including in comparison with in-person health checks, including who does and doesn't use the Online check.
- Examine uptake rates and explore economic costs and assessments of value of online NHS Health Checks for services and service users.
- Capture and disseminate transferable learning for technology-supported care and its users, including wider roll out of the NHS Health Check Online service, and feasibility of larger-scale evaluation.

## **What data will be used for the evaluation?**

Anonymised quantitative data already collected through the service will be used for the evaluation, as well as qualitative data gathered through interviews, workshops, and observations with users (users and non-users), providers, the delivery team, local authorities, and other stakeholders.

## **What will NHS Health Check Online mean for local authorities?**

### **Will NHS Health Check Online replace in-person checks?**

As recommended by the review of the NHS Health Check programme in 2021, NHS Health Check Online is being developed as an additional mode of delivery to the existing NHS Health Check programme. The aim is that many people will choose to take up the invitation to complete their NHS Health Check online for ease and convenience, and that this will improve overall uptake and free up capacity in primary care. There will be people who are unable to complete their NHS Health Check online for a variety of reasons and alternative provision will continue to be needed. The NHS Health Check online will be considered a full NHS Health Check and count towards LA official statistics and delivery of the programme.

### **What does a national NHS Health Check Online mean for local commissioning of the programme?**

The NHS Health Check is part of local authorities' statutory duties. Local authorities should continue commissioning the in-person NHS Health Check and may want to consider building in flexibility to also adopt the online check in the future. NHS Health Check market



segmentation resources and population health management tools are available to support commissioning.

The private Beta phase in 2025/26 will help to determine the most suitable commissioning and delivery approach for rollout at scale.

Subsequent guidance on the impact and implications of NHS Health Check Online on local commissioning will follow prior to any wider rollout and be informed by further stakeholder engagement.

## **How will we continue to communicate with local authorities?**

DHSC will continue to engage local authorities at key points throughout the course of the development, testing and rollout of NHS Health Check Online. We will update you regularly through existing channels, including via newsletters to Directors of Public Health, via DHSC regional teams and the Local Implementers National Forum (LINF). The Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Public Health are represented on the NHS Health Check Advisory Group and are provided with regular updates and opportunities to influence policy development.

## **Will local authorities have to pay to use NHS Health Check Online during the private Beta phase?**

There are currently no plans to require local authorities to pay DHSC to use NHS Health Check Online in the private Beta phase. The private Beta phase in 2025/26 will help to determine the most suitable commissioning and delivery approach for rollout at scale and further guidance will be provided.

DHSC is currently working on establishing a national blood testing framework that local authorities will be able to draw down from for the home blood testing element of the NHS Health Check Online. We are hoping this will be live towards the end of 2025.

Subject to commercial approval and to allow more time to transition to this procurement approach, DHSC hopes to be in the position to procure and cover the cost of blood tests centrally until March 2026.

Local authorities will need to determine how they pay providers for delivering the NHS Health Check Online in line with their usual model, for example, including payment to providers for sending out invites to the NHS Health Check online.

# **What does this mean for GPs/providers?**

## **Will NHS Health Check Online results be shared with GPs?**

Yes. In line with legislative requirements, results from NHS Health Check Online will be shared with GPs. The user's risk assessment inputs and the outcome of the online check will be coded back to the patient's record. Tasks in the GP system may also be sent to ensure appropriate clinical follow up. We are also working closely with Information Governance specialists to ensure appropriate privacy controls are implemented, including data sharing agreements.

## **How will NHS Health Check Online results be flagged to GPs?**

Results from NHS Health Check Online that sit outside of normal parameters will be flagged to the GP via the GP electronic workflow to ensure they can easily identify and prioritise participants for follow up. The private Beta phase will test this further to ensure the flags are operating as intended and are fit-for-purpose.

## **Will GPs receive any support or training to rollout the digital offer?**

Yes, the roll out of NHS Health Check Online will include support as part of implementation. We have engaged with commissioners and providers in the current 3 local authority pilot areas and produced an implementation toolkit to support them. This sits on the FuturesNHS site and will be available to all GPs and LAs as and when they express an interest in delivering the online check.

# **How will this work for people eligible for the NHS Health Check?**

## **How will eligible people be invited to and access NHS Health Check Online?**

For local authorities that are successfully selected for the next phase of testing in private Beta, DHSC will work with local commissioners and GP providers to identify the eligible population and invite them to participate in either an online or face-to-face NHS Health Check. We have developed invite templates that have been tested with users and can be adapted locally to align with current invitation methods.

## **What happens after NHS Health Check Online has been completed?**

People who complete NHS Health Check Online will receive their results (including for individual risk factors and 10-year CVD risk score) along with personalised advice on ways to reduce their CVD risk based on their results. People with results that fall outside of the normal range will be advised to follow up with their GP.

Results will also be written back to the individual's electronic patient record. GP practices will be required to ensure appropriate clinical follow up by making sure all patients with a flag of 'follow-up required' or 'urgent follow-up required' are actioned within the same timeframes as they would for in-person NHS Health Checks, and as per normal practice policy and clinical judgement. If someone is unable to complete their NHS Health Check Online for any reason, they will be directed to follow up with their GP to complete their NHS Health Check in person.

The communication of results will be tested with users during the private Beta phase and improvements made where required.

## **How will we ensure the home blood test is user friendly?**

It is critical that all elements of the NHS Health Check Online pathway are user friendly, effective and efficient, this includes the blood sampling requirement.

After successfully submitting their blood pressure reading, the user will be directed to the final stage where they will be asked to order a blood test kit.

Blood test kits are sent by post and fit through a standard sized letterbox. The blood test kits comply with packaging requirements for transporting biological substances.

Once the blood test kit is ordered, the user will be provided with an explanation of what happens next, including a link to a [help and support page](#) for the blood test stage.