

# Core brief

Tuesday 29 November 2016

## Introduction

This issue of Core Brief details a Scottish Government press release on a major overhaul of outpatient appointments.

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## Major overhaul of outpatient appointments

A plan to deliver a major shift in the way outpatient care is delivered, giving patients faster and more local access to care, has been published today.

The Modern Outpatient: A Collaborative Approach 2017-2020 sets out a new strategy for responding to rising demand and aims to free up 400,000 hospital outpatient appointments by 2020.

Outpatients are those people who have been referred to hospital for a further assessment of their condition by a consultant.

Of the 4.5 million outpatient appointments delivered by the NHS in Scotland each year, 1.5 million were new appointments and 3 million were return appointments - either for follow-up care or a routine check-up.

The strategy proposes that some patients, particularly those who are waiting for a routine check-up or test results, would be seen closer to home by a team of community healthcare professionals with close links to hospital departments. The NHS will also make better use of e-consultations and action will be taken to reduce the number of unnecessary referrals.

[Click here to read the full press release.](#)

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