



North & South Essex
Local Medical Committees

**Essex LMC
General Practice
Appointments Overview:
January 2026**



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Essex General Practice: A Month in Review (January 2026)

A snapshot of primary care activity across 204 GP practices, balancing impressive service delivery with the impact of missed sessions.

Access and Appointment Volume

1,001,106

Total Appointments Offered



Over one million appointments were provided by Essex GP practice staff in a single month.



67%

Appointments Were Face-to-Face

674,230 patients were seen in person by clinical staff across the county.

46%

Same-Day Access

Nearly half of all patients who contacted their practice received a same-day appointment.



The Impact of Missed Appointments



31,044

'Did Not Attend' Appointments

Tens of thousands of scheduled slots were missed by patients without prior cancellation.



2,070 Hours

of Clinical Time Wasted

Equivalent to over 2,000 hours lost based on standard 15-minute appointment slots.



1 in 3 Patients

Saw Their GP Face-to-Face

Despite high demand, 1 in every 3.05 registered patients saw a GP in person.



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Essex LMC General Practice Appointments Overview: January 2026 Analysis

Executive Summary

This briefing document synthesises the operational data and patient engagement metrics for General Practice (GP) services across Essex for the period of January 2026.

The data reveals a high-volume healthcare environment, with total appointments exceeding one million for the month. Key trends include a significant month-on-month increase in both total and GP-specific appointments, as well as a sharp rise in online consultations, which reached an all-time high for the year-long tracking period.

Despite this high throughput, efficiency is impacted by over 31,000 "Did Not Attend" (DNA) appointments, resulting in thousands of wasted clinical hours. Access remains a priority, with nearly half of patients contacting practices receiving same-day appointments, and a substantial portion of the patient population continuing to be seen in person.

Patient Population and Practice Infrastructure

As of **January 31, 2026**, the Essex healthcare landscape is defined by the following infrastructure and patient demographics:

- **Total Registered Patients: 2,016,793.** This represents a slight decrease of 237 patients compared to December 2025.
- **Total GP Practices: 204. This is the same number of practices as in December 2025.**

Appointment Volume and Trends

January 2026 saw a marked increase in clinical activity compared to the preceding month across all measured categories.



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Aggregate Appointment Data

<u>Metric</u>	<u>January 2026 Total</u>	<u>December 2025 Total</u>
Total Appointments (GP & Non-GP)	1,001,106	926,087
GP-Specific Appointments	418,651	385,237
Appointments per 1,000 Patients (Total)	511	476
Appointments per 1,000 Patients (GP)	211	195

Access and Timeliness

The data indicates a robust effort to provide timely care, although the percentage of same-day appointments saw a minor decline:

- **Same-Day Appointments:** 453,003 total same-day appointments were conducted.
- **Same-Day Rate:** 46% of patients who contacted their practice received a same-day appointment. However, as a percentage of all scheduled appointments, the rate was 43.5% (a decrease from 44.6% in December 2025).
- **Appointments within 14 Days:** 523,511 appointments (54.0% of the total) were conducted within two weeks of booking, showing an improvement from 52.8% in December 2025.

Modalities of Care: Face-to-Face vs. Online

The delivery of care in Essex utilises a hybrid model of traditional in-person visits and a rapidly growing online consultation framework.

In-Person Consultations

- **Face-to-Face Volume:** 674,230 patients were seen face-to-face in January 2026.
- **GP In-Person Ratio:** 1 in 3.05 registered patients saw their GP face-to-face during this period.



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Online Consultations

Online consultation usage has seen a dramatic upward trajectory over the last 13 months, peaking in January 2026.

- **Total Online Consultations:** 392,783 (compared to 305,970 in December 2025).
- **Online Consults per 1,000 Patients:** 186.66.
- **Historical Context:** Online consultations have grown steadily from approximately 150,000 in January 2025 to nearly 400,000 in January 2026.

Operational Efficiency and Challenges

A significant barrier to practice efficiency is the volume of missed appointments.

- **"Did Not Attend" (DNA) Count:** 31,044 appointments were missed in January 2026.
- **Resource Impact:** Based on standard 15-minute appointment slots, these DNAs resulted in **2,070 hours of clinical time wasted**.
- **System Pressure:** Practices emphasize that patients should be "kind, patient, and responsible" when accessing services to help manage these pressures.

Alternative Care Pathways

To alleviate pressure on GPs, the system emphasizes that "Our trained clinical staff can treat a range of conditions," and patients may not always require a direct appointment with a GP. Patients are encouraged to utilize the following resources:

- **Digital Self-Service:**
 - NHS Website: www.nhs.uk
 - NHS 111 Online: 111.nhs.uk
- **Specialised Support:**
 - Mental Health: www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters
 - Parental Advice (Children & Young People): healthiertogether.nhs.uk
- **Community Services:**
 - Pharmacy Finder: www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy

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