



North & South Essex
Local Medical Committees

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



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Essex General Practice: April 2026 Performance Snapshot

Data from 204 GP practices serving over 2 million registered patients in Essex during April 2026, highlighting high same-day and face-to-face care volumes alongside significant resource loss from unattended appointments.



TOTAL APPOINTMENTS OFFERED:
926,937

Total capacity provided by all practice staff across Essex in April.



45%
SAME-DAY ACCESS

Nearly half of all patients who contacted their practice received an appointment that same day.

Appointment Volume & Access

Appointment Category	April 2026 Total	Monthly Trend
Total Appointments	926,937	↓ Decrease from March
GP-Specific Appointments	378,186	↓ Decrease from March
Online Consultations	345,009	↓ Decrease from March



614,592

FACE-TO-FACE VISITS
Roughly 1 in 3.33 registered patients saw their GP in person this month.

Wasted Capacity & Alternatives



28,862
'DID NOT ATTEND' APPOINTMENTS

Appointments booked but missed without prior cancellation.



1,924
CLINICAL HOURS WASTED

Calculated based on standard 15-minute appointment slots lost to non-attendance.



Diversified Care Options



NHS 111



Local Pharmacies



Online Support

Patients are encouraged to use NHS 111, local pharmacies, and online support for non-GP needs.



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Essex LMC General Practice Appointments Overview: April 2026 Analysis

Executive Summary

This briefing document provides a detailed analysis of General Practice (GP) appointment data and patient access for Essex during April 2026. Data published by NHS Digital on May 28, 2026, indicates that while the patient population remains stable at over 2 million individuals, there has been a significant month-on-month decrease across all key appointment metrics compared to March 2026.

In April 2026, Essex GP practices offered 926,937 total appointments, with 614,592 patients seen face-to-face. Approximately 43% to 45% of appointments or patient contacts resulted in same-day service. Despite the high volume of care provided, the system faced operational challenges, including 28,862 "Did Not Attend" (DNA) instances, resulting in 1,924 wasted clinical hours. Online consultation usage also saw a decline from the previous month, following a period of sustained growth throughout 2025 and early 2026.



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Patient Population and Practice Infrastructure

As of April 30, 2026, the healthcare landscape in Essex is characterised by a massive patient base managed through a stable number of practices.

- **Registered Patients:** 2,014,555 (a marginal decrease of 22 patients from March 2026).
- **Number of Practices:** 204 (consistent with March 2026).
- **GP Face-to-Face Accessibility:** 1 in 3.33 registered patients saw their GP face-to-face during the month.

Comprehensive Appointment Analysis

The data reveals a broad reduction in appointment volumes and frequency per 1,000 patients when compared to March 2026 figures.

Appointment Volume and Performance Metrics

Metric	April 2026	March 2026
Total Appointments (GP & Non-GP)	926,937	1,041,873
Total GP Appointments	378,186	434,603
Same Day Appointments	413,318	469,405
Appointments within 14 Days	485,788	550,903
GP Appointments per 1,000 Patients	192	220
Total Appointments per 1,000 Patients	473	533



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Timeliness of Access

The efficiency of patient access remained relatively stable in terms of percentages, despite lower raw numbers:

- **Same Day Access:** 43.0% of appointments occurred on the same day (down slightly from 43.1% in March). Separately, data indicates 45% of patients who contacted their practice received a same-day appointment.
- **14-Day Window:** 54.2% of appointments were conducted within 14 days (down from 54.6% in March).

Consultation Modalities

Care delivery in Essex is divided between traditional face-to-face interactions and digital consultations.

Face-to-Face Consultations

- **Total Patients Seen:** 614,592.
- **Distribution:** A significant portion of the total 926,937 appointments (all staff) were conducted in person.

Online Consultations

Online consultation data, sourced from the NHSE online consultation dataset, shows a cooling of digital demand in April 2026.

- **Total Online Consultations:** 345,009 (a decrease from 402,644 in March).
- **Online Consultations per 1,000 Patients:** 163.47 (down from 190.36 in March).
- **Historical Context:** Since January 2025, online consultations showed a steady upward trajectory, peaking in March 2026 before the April decline.

Operational Efficiency and Resource Waste

A critical area of concern for Essex GP practices is the loss of clinical capacity due to missed appointments.

- **"Did Not Attend" (DNA) Count:** 28,862 appointments.
- **Total Time Wasted:** 1,924 hours (calculated based on standard 15-minute appointment slots).



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Patient Guidance and Alternative Care Pathways

Practices continue to emphasise that a GP is not always the necessary point of contact. Trained clinical staff within practices are capable of treating a wide range of conditions, which can lead to patients being seen and treated sooner.

Patients are encouraged to utilise alternative resources before contacting their practice:

- **Digital Self-Service:**
 - NHS Website: General health information www.nhs.uk
 - NHS 111 Online for urgent medical advice: 111.nhs.uk
- **Specialised Support:**
 - Mental Health Support: “Every Mind Matters”: www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters
 - Parental Advice (Children & Young People): healthiertogether.nhs.uk
- **Community Services:**
 - Pharmacy Services: Local pharmacy search for minor ailments: www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy
- **Healthier Together:**
 - Specific advice for parents of children and young people: www.healthiertogether.nhs.uk

The primary directive to the public is to remain kind, patient, and responsible when accessing services to ensure the continued support of GP practices.



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