



North & South Essex

Local Medical Committees

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



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Essex GP Practice Appointments: March 2026 Insights

SERVICE ACCESS AND DELIVERY



1,041,873

Total Appointments Offered

Over one million appointments were provided across all Essex practice staff in March.

66% of Patients Seen Face-to-Face



of Patients Seen Face-to-Face

690,961 appointments were conducted in person, meaning 1 in 2.97 patients saw their GP.

46% Same-Day Appointments



Same-Day Appointments

Nearly half of all patients who contacted their practice were seen the same day.

Category	Value
Total Registered Patients	2,014,577
Appointments Delivered	1,041,873
Appointments Missed	32,604

THE IMPACT OF MISSED CARE



32,604

'Did Not Attend' Appointments

A significant number of patients failed to attend their scheduled sessions during the month.



2,174

Hours of Clinical Time Wasted

Based on 15-minute slots, missed appointments resulted in thousands of lost hours.

Use Digital and Pharmacy Alternatives

Patients are encouraged to use NHS 111 online or local pharmacies for minor conditions.





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Essex LMC General Practice Appointments Overview: March 2026 Analysis

Executive Summary

This briefing summarises the performance and utilisation data for General Practice (GP) services across Essex for the month of March 2026. Based on data published by NHS Digital on April 30, 2026, the county continues to handle high patient volumes, with over 1 million appointments offered. Key highlights include a 46% same-day appointment rate and a significant emphasis on face-to-face care, with 690,961 patients seen in person. However, the system faces challenges regarding efficiency; over 32,000 appointments were missed (Did Not Attend), resulting in 2,174 wasted hours of clinical time.

Patient Population and Access

As of **March 31, 2026**, the total number of registered patients with an Essex GP practice stood at **2,014,577**. This represents a **slight decrease of 809 patients** compared to the previous month.

Appointment Availability

GP practices in Essex offered a high volume of consultations to meet the needs of this population:

- **Total Appointments Offered:** 1,041,873
- **Same-Day Access:** 46% of patients who contacted their practice received a same-day appointment.



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Modes of Care and Clinical Staffing

The data indicates a strong focus on traditional face-to-face (F2F) consultations while utilising a diverse range of clinical professionals.

Face-to-Face Consultations

- **FaTotal F2F Appointments:** 690,961 patients were seen in person.
 - **Patient Ratio:** Approximately 1 in every 2.97 registered patients saw their GP face-to-face during this period.
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Clinical Resource Allocation

This briefing emphasises that patients may not always require an appointment specifically with a GP. Practices utilise a variety of "trained clinical staff" capable of treating a range of conditions. This multidisciplinary approach is intended to help patients be seen more efficiently by the most appropriate professional.

Operational Challenges: Missed Appointments (DNAs)

A significant barrier to practice efficiency is the number of "Did Not Attend" (DNA) appointments. These missed sessions represent a loss of critical clinical capacity.

Metric	Impact
Total DNA Appointments	32,604
Wasted Clinical Hours	2,174 hours

Note: Wasted hours are calculated based on standard 15-minute appointment slots.



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Patient Guidance and Alternative Pathways

To support practice staff and ensure resources are used responsibly, patients are encouraged to remain "kind, patient and responsible" when accessing services. Furthermore, patients are advised to consider alternative NHS resources before contacting their practice for non-urgent needs.

Recommended Alternative Resources

Before contacting a GP practice, the following resources are recommended for patient use:

- **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

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