

National Health Service Referral Checklist

Getting started with care through the National Health Service (NHS) can sometimes feel overwhelming — especially if you're not sure what to ask for or what happens next. Most people start their care journey with their General Practitioner (GP) and a referral through the National Health Service.

This simple checklist is designed to guide you step-by-step, from your GP visit to seeing a specialist so you can feel confident, ask the right questions, and advocate for the care you deserve. Bring it with you, take notes, and use it as a reference along the way. A little preparation can make a big difference.

Before your GP appointment

- Write down symptoms and when they started
- Note how your voice difficulties affect your daily life
- List previous treatments
- Bring recordings if helpful
- Prepare questions

During the appointment

- Clearly describe impact (“I struggle to speak at work/on the phone”)
- Ask directly for referral to a Voice Clinic or ENT voice specialist service
- Mention suspected conditions if applicable
- Ask about waiting times
- Request Speech & Language Therapy referral if you have already had an ENT evaluation with a diagnosis
- Confirm next steps before leaving

Helpful phrase:

“I’d like a referral to a voice specialist or laryngology clinic with experience in neurological or functional voice disorders.”

After referral

- Track appointment dates
 - Follow up if you haven't heard back
 - Ask to join the cancellation list
 - Gather records for second opinions
 - Consider private options if delays are long
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For your specialist visit

- Bring symptom notes
 - List medications
 - Ask about all treatment options
 - Ask how many dysphonia patients they treat
 - Request therapy referral
 - Confirm follow-up plan
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Quick reminders

- ✓ It's okay to ask questions
- ✓ It's okay to seek second opinions
- ✓ Specialist care matters
- ✓ Support is available