

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 through 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 affects 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 ENT or voice specialist referral
- Mention suspected conditions if applicable
- Ask about wait times
- Request Speech & Language Therapy referral (*if appropriate*)
- 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

Please note: This resource is provided by Dysphonia International for informational purposes only. It is designed to support understanding of the NHS referral process and to help individuals communicate more effectively with healthcare providers.

It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult a qualified healthcare professional regarding medical concerns or care decisions.

Healthcare pathways and services may vary by location and over time. While efforts are made to ensure accuracy, Dysphonia International does not guarantee completeness or endorse specific providers or treatments.

**For more information on resources and support,
please contact Dysphonia International at dysphonia.org.uk**