

Ava's Journey of accessing GP-Led Services (June 2021)

Ava hasn't been well since getting ill with a 'virus' (maybe COVID-19 but before testing was available to the public). She is experience regular nausea, dizziness, brain fog and other random symptoms and this is taking its toll on her general living.

The following meme sums up how her recent contact with here general practice felt like!



Ava's journey and touchpoints with primary care

Ava had **struggled to get through on the phone to the GP** to ask for help.

The surgery doesn't have e-Consult (or any other clinical online platform) on their website. So, she detailed all her symptoms on an email (as this is in their 'contact us' information.)

After two weeks of not hearing anything, Ava called the surgery, to be told that she needs an appointment so that the doctor can look at the information. She asked for an appointment and was told she'd need to call back first thing to make one. Ava called the next morning and was offered a phone consultation.

The phone consultation took place and the GP said she needed to get some blood tests done. Ava went to the surgery to pick-up the blood test form.

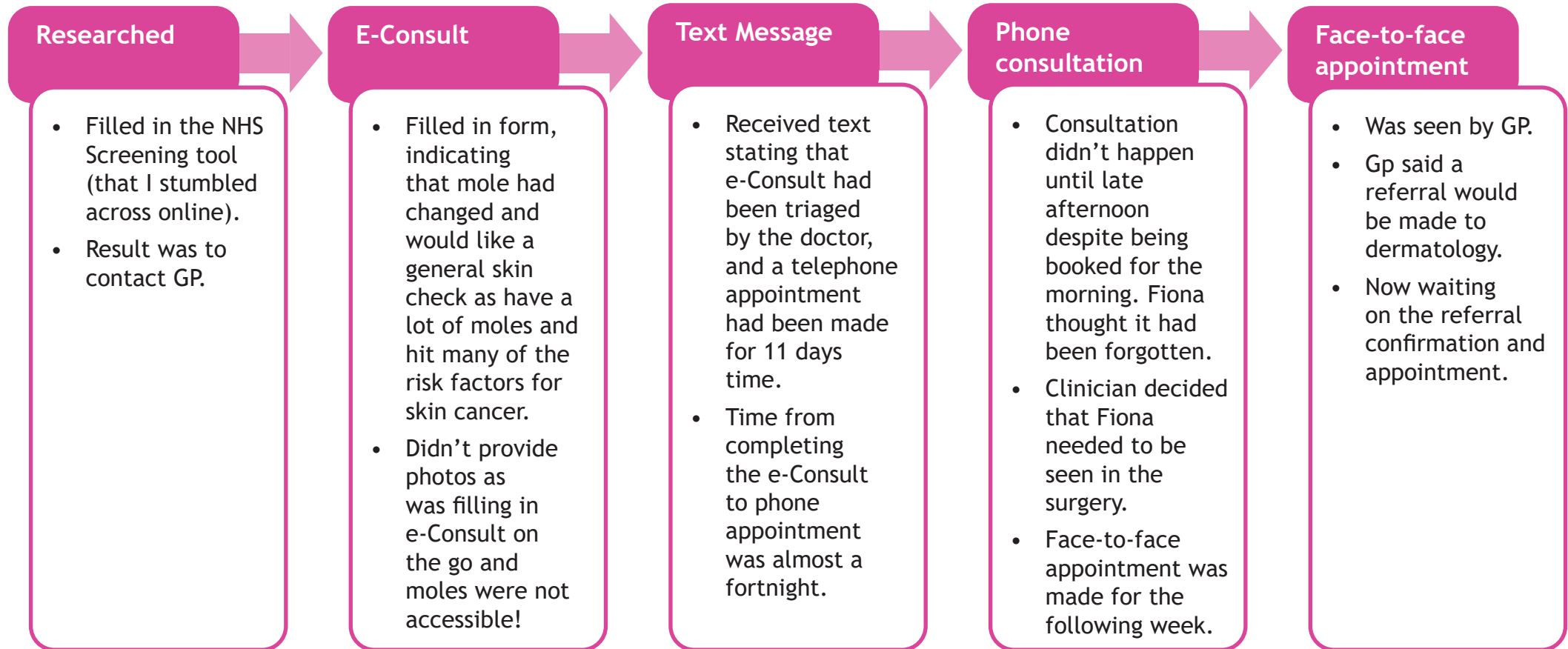
Ava had blood taken for the tests at a community hospital (which was very quick and efficient). After a week, Ava called the surgery (after peak time) to ask about the results.

Receptionist had to speak to a GP about the results. So agreed to call back. The Receptionist called Ava back, to say all the results had come back fine. Ava finished the call feeling she had got nowhere with getting some support. She decided to keep a log of her symptoms and do more research.

Since this then, Ava realised she had another significant symptom and has followed this up and got a diagnosis on a chronic illness.

Fiona's Journey of accessing GP-Led Services

Fiona needed to get a mole checked out as it met several of the [ABCD changes](#) that we're advised to look out for.



‘I have no complaints about the actual GP interactions or what happened at the appointment.

However, the process was **frustrating** and made me feel ‘stupid’ and that I was wasting their time. The fact that it was decided a phone appointment almost two weeks away was the first point of call seemed **pointless**, particularly as the NHS screening tool had advised me to contact my GP and I'd already provided as much information as I could on e-Consult.

I almost cancelled as my concern was obviously minor and I was already **worried about wasting their time**. I also **felt annoyed** that something visual was relegated to a phone appointment despite all the information I'd provided. We are encouraged to seek a doctor's advice with changes (skin, lumps, etc.) but I ended up **feeling I was over-reacting**.

There was **anxiety** attached to the appointment, both in having to strip off and the fact that it is a cancer screening prompted by change, rather than a routine screening. Although the anxiety levels were low, it was heightened by the process and that I was making a fuss about nothing.’

Kathy's Journey of accessing GP-Led Services

- a contrast to Fiona but for similar health needs

Kathy needed to get a skin blemish/mole on her face (so exposed to UV) checked out as that it had grown, was mis-shaped and rough to touch.

Researched

- Looked at various images of skins moles/marks that were cancerous.
- These seemed to match the type of skin mark that Kathy had on her face and therefore needs a clinical review.

Called Surgery

- Kathy's surgery (in West Sussex) does not have e-Consult or other methods of getting an appointment.
- She called the surgery after the 'rush time'.
- She explained her concerns and that she had attempted to take photos so these could be sent in but they were very blurred.
- She was offered a face-to-face appointment two weeks from the call.

I was surprised but delighted to be able to book an appointment in advance so that the changes to this mark on my face could be examined and I was not concerned over the wait to see a GP.

I realise there is a lot of demand on our GP services at the moment.