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AI chatbots for clinics: how to use them safely

A chatbot can answer routine questions at any hour. In healthcare it also needs clear limits, and this guide sets them out.

Good uses

- Opening hours, locations and parking
- Services offered and who provides them
- Fees, insurers and payment
- How to book, change or cancel
- What to bring and how to prepare

Limits to set

The assistant should not diagnose, interpret symptoms or give treatment advice. It should say clearly that it is automated. It should direct anyone describing an urgent problem to appropriate urgent services and to your team.

Data protection

Health information is special category data under UK data protection law. Design the assistant so that it does not ask for health details, tell users how their information is used, and check where the supplier stores conversations.

Keep a person in the loop

Every conversation should offer a route to a member of staff. Review a sample of conversations each month and correct any answer that was unclear or wrong.

Related pages

- AI chatbots and assistants
- Hosting, domains and email

Common questions

Can a chatbot book appointments?

Yes. It can link to your online booking system or collect details for your team to confirm.

Do I need to tell patients they are talking to an AI?

Yes. Being open about automation is good practice and builds trust.

Checklist

- ☐ Our assistant says clearly that it is automated
- ☐ It does not diagnose or give treatment advice
- ☐ It directs urgent problems to urgent services
- ☐ It does not ask for health details
- ☐ A member of staff reviews conversations each month

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