

# The NHS Constitution gives you the right to start your non-emergency treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks.

As long as you choose it and it is appropriate for you, **you have the right to start your non-emergency treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks** from when you are referred by your GP, or to ask the NHS to take all reasonable steps to offer you a range of alternatives if this is not possible.

**In fact, most patients can expect to start treatment much sooner.**

Your rights around waiting times and everything else about your NHS care are set out in the NHS Constitution, which brings together in one place what we can all expect from the NHS and what is expected from us in return.

To read the NHS Constitution or to find out how many ways you can access the NHS, please:

visit [www.nhs.uk/nhsconstitution](http://www.nhs.uk/nhsconstitution)

call NHS Direct on 0845 4647

or ask your GP.



**THE NHS**  
**CONSTITUTION**  
the NHS belongs to us all