

# Welcolme to Flo

Helping you manage your health



Simple  
TELEHEALTH  
Florence

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## What is it?

Quite simply, 'Florence' or 'Flo' as we like to call her, is a very easy to use service designed by professionals inside the NHS to provide support and advice for you to manage your own condition.

Flo combines the expertise of your healthcare team and the convenience of your own mobile phone to give you prompts and advice to act on. If you need a little more assistance Flo helps you to monitor your vital signs such as blood pressure, pulse, oxygen levels and many others. Flo makes use of the familiar and convenient mobile phone text service 'SMS' to communicate with you directly.

## It is your choice

One of your healthcare team has asked if you'd like to use Flo. You'll need to give your mobile phone number to register, and then Flo will send a short note to your mobile phone introducing herself and asking you to confirm that you want to join. If you're happy to receive texts from Flo and to share your information with the doctors and nurses who look after you, just reply to Flo's note with YES. Flo won't do anything else until you reply. You are in control.

## Reminders and information

Flo sends the kind of messages you've agreed to. Some may be to remind you to take your medication, and others may give you information to help you manage better. You won't be expected to reply to these.

## Monitoring

Sometimes you will be asked to reply to Flo, but there will be clear instructions in the text message about how to do this. You may be asked about how you liked the Flo system, or how you are managing your health, and some patients will be asked to text in readings of their bodily measurements, such as blood pressure, oxygen, weight, and so on. Flo is very flexible about how and when you send your readings in and Flo can be set up to expect your readings at a time to suit you. But you can send them in before or after the scheduled time, it is up to you. However, just to be helpful Flo may send you a prompt or two to remind you that your readings are due.



It's quick and easy to send a reading in. You just send a text with the reading, and usually a short word or a few letters (you'll be told by Flo what to write), so that Flo knows where to put the information in the computer. Flo will check the reading against a guide set up by your healthcare team and will reply, either telling you that everything is normal or giving you advice to follow on what to do next. The advice might remind you to do something you have already agreed with your doctor or nurse, or could ask you to call your healthcare team for further help.

## Sharing

Information you send in to Flo can be shared across your healthcare team. They will be able to see the texts you and Flo have sent to each other and Flo also shows them charts and graphs just the same way as they would see it on any professional medical system.

**But they will only look at the readings occasionally, so if you feel unwell, you will still need to contact them in the usual way.**

## Does it cost me anything?

No. When you are in the UK - at home, on holiday or just visiting friends Flo is completely free to use even if your phone warns you (incorrectly) that there will be a charge, as the NHS is paying for it. Flo can also be used from anywhere else in the world, but you will be charged your normal network rate for the messages, and you can't use the FREEPHONE number, so if you don't want to pay extra while you're abroad, text 'HOLIDAY' to Flo, and have a break from the messages until you return to the UK (see below). If you choose to use Flo to record your vital signs, the equipment may be provided free of charge, depending on your local arrangement.

## How do I stop the messages, if I find they are getting too much for me?

If you want to completely stop using Flo, simply text STOP to Flo, (the number which is sending the messages), and you will no longer receive any communication from Flo. If you want to start again at a later date, you'll need to text 'YES' to Flo before you can be set up on any new set of messages.

However, if you just want a holiday from receiving the messages, just send HOLIDAY, or AWAY to Flo, and your messages will stop until you return and text HOME to the same number.



## It looks a bit complicated - do I need to put the messages in capital letters?

Flo recognises both upper and lower case, so just write in whatever is easiest for you.

## What do patients say?

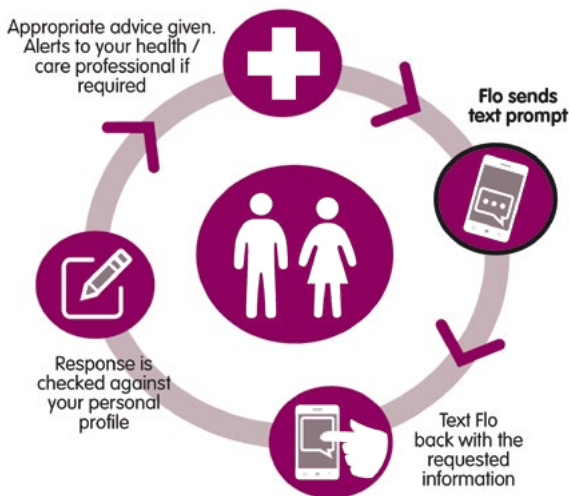
"The service has altered my life. I feel supported...It's great".

"I was astonished at how Flo changed my medication habits".

"I now feel that I am not on my own"

## Who runs the service?

Flo is provided for you by your local healthcare provider.



**IMPORTANT: Florence is NOT an emergency service.**  
If you feel unwell, contact your medical team in the usual way.