



Standards for Online and Remote Providers of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

**Joint BASHH/FSRH Standard
January 2019**

Background

The image displays a screenshot of the iCaSH website, which is an integrated platform for contraception and sexual health services. The interface is divided into several key sections:

- Top Navigation:** A dark grey bar at the top contains a cookie consent message, the website URL "Visit Lloydspharmacy.com", and buttons for "Log in to Patient Record", "Register", and "My Basket".
- Primary Menu:** A horizontal menu below the top bar features "SH:24" in large text, followed by navigation tabs for "STI test" (highlighted in red), "Sexual health", "Contraception", and "Get support".
- Secondary Navigation:** A teal bar includes the contact number "+44 203936 4095", "Activate Test", "Account Sign in", and search, shopping, and language icons.
- Content Area:** The main content area features a purple navigation bar with links for "Find us", "What to Expect", "Contraception & Sexual Health", "Sex & Relationships", "Contact", "Professionals", and "Hide Page". Below this, a large banner reads "WELCOME TO iCaSH Integrated Contraception and Sexual Health services." and includes a "How do we measure" graphic.
- Search and Location:** A search bar with the text "Search iCaSH" and the NHS logo is present. A location finder widget asks "Where can I go to..." and "Nearest to..." with a dropdown menu showing "Get a Chlamydia test" and a "Find Now" button.
- Footer/Bottom:** The bottom of the page features a colorful graphic with icons representing various services like condoms, underwear, and a hand holding a device.

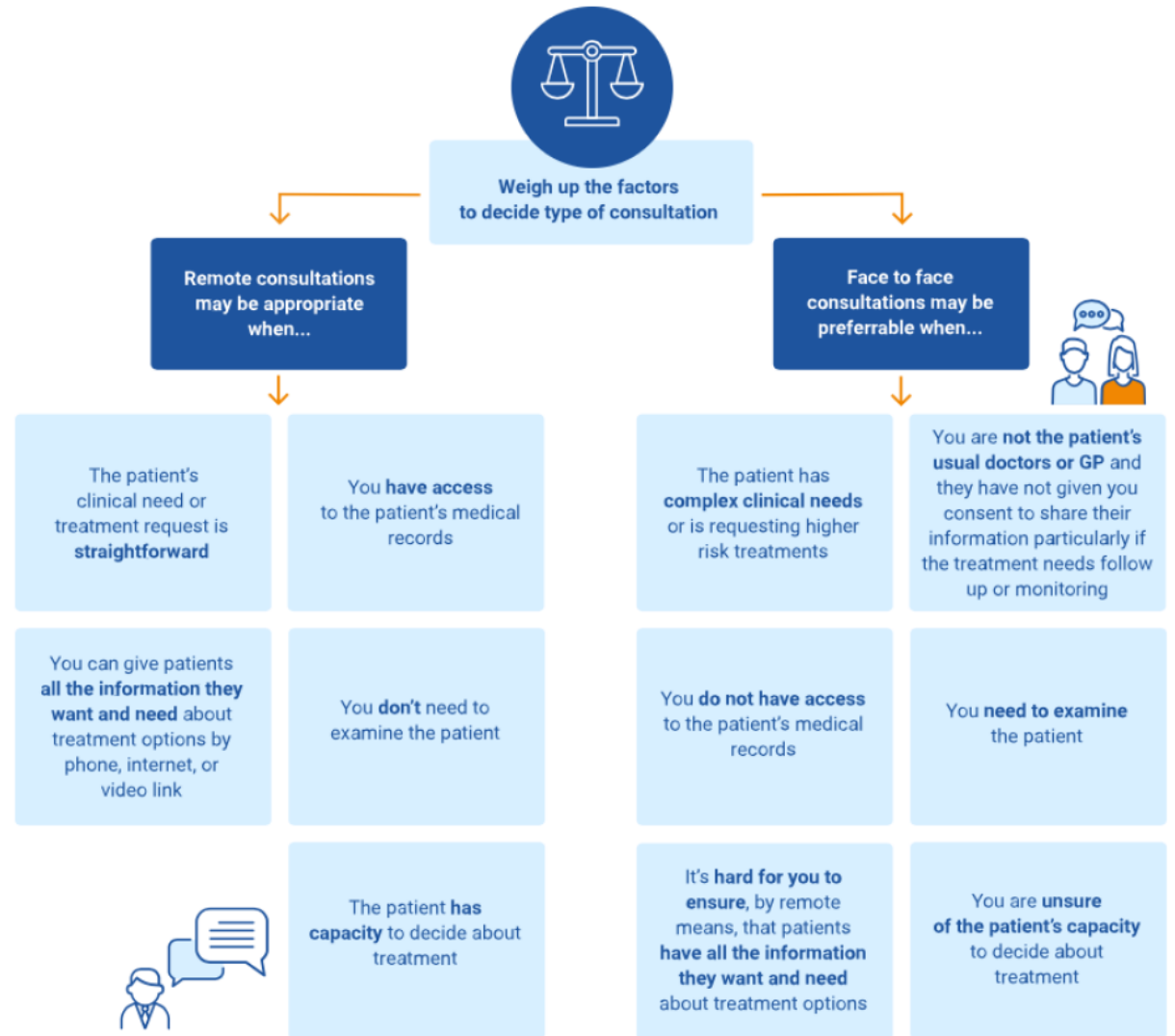
Background

- The standards have been developed in response to the rapid expansion of online services in the UK.
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that the proportion of over-16s looking for health-related information on the internet has increased by 30% in the last decade in Great Britain, with more than half of adults surveyed doing so in 2018.
- Care Quality Commission, *The State of Care in Independent in online primary health services*, March 2018

Who is the Standard for?

- Developed and driven by a concern for patient safety.
- For healthcare professionals, providers and service commissioners to promote standardised care procedures and consistency of care across all healthcare settings.
- Online services are a complement, not a substitute, to face-to-face consultations.

GMC Remote Consultations Flowchart, 2018



Key recommendations in the standards include:

- Safe prescribing practices: prescribers should adhere to national guidelines on prescribing. The mode of consultation should not interfere with best practice prescribing.
- Capacity/Consent: it is recommended that under-16s are signposted to face-to face services.
- Safe-guarding of children and vulnerable adults: limitations associated with online and remote consultations should be acknowledged and, where appropriate, service users should be referred for face-to-face consultations.

“Online services are a complement, not a substitute, to face-to-face consultations and, irrespective of consultation modality, best practice and guidelines must be adhered to at every user contact to ensure safety and quality of care.”

Dr Helen Munro, Vice President of FSRH

“Online services increasingly form part of the service that patients and commissioners expect. Delivered well, they have the potential to support access and improve public health...Importantly, the standards prioritise safety and indicate when a face-to face consultation is preferred. The standards emphasise that quality should not be compromised for any modality of care.”

Dr Raj Patel, Chair of the Clinical Standards Unit of BASHH

Thank you!

- Raj Patel
- Elizabeth Carlin
- David Phillips
- Kaveh Manavi
- Asha Kasliwal
- Dianna Reed
- Savita Brito-Mutunayagam

