

Brian James

Patient, Sturry Surgery, Canterbury, Kent

By January 2007 over 2 million referrals to specialist care had been made through Choose and Book by GPs across England.

This represents a significant number of patients who have not had to put their life on hold while they wait to hear from a hospital when their appointment will be, and who have been able to book their appointment at their convenience. This number will rise over the coming months as use of Choose and Book continues to increase.

Brian James is a retired mechanical fitter from Canterbury in Kent where he has been a patient of Sturry Surgery for 18 years. He was one of the first patients to use Choose and Book in his area. When his GP, Dr Paul Molony suggested that a referral might be necessary Brian was very happy to choose his hospital during the consultation and allow Dr Molony to book the appointment there and then.

“Dr Molony suggested that I needed to see a haematologist. When he logged onto Choose and Book we had a number of hospitals to choose from, he asked me which hospital I would like to go to and when was I available. I told him I wanted to go to Kent & Canterbury and gave him some dates. Within a couple of minutes it was all done and dusted, time, place, exactly what I wanted, as simple as that, and I had an appointment within three days”

Brian leads a full and active life. When he is not looking after his four grandchildren he is enjoying one of his many hobbies which include fly fishing, walking, cycling and gardening.



Thanks to Choose and Book, Brian was pleased that his life was not too greatly interrupted by having to wait anxiously for a letter to arrive in the post confirming a hospital appointment time and date which may not be convenient for him.

“The traditional way of doing things was that my doctor would write to the hospital he wanted to refer me to, I in turn would have to wait for them to write to me confirming a date and time. If it didn't suit me, I would have to say no, and so it would be another letter and so on and so forth. Choose and Book is first class in every way because there are no letters going backwards and forwards if I can't make the appointment”

Brian thinks that being able to choose a hospital is a good thing, especially when he thinks about his family and the future.

“Later on in life, there will come a time when I possibly can't drive and have to make arrangements for one of my children to take me to hospital. Then I would want to choose one that is local and easy to get to because I would want people to come and see me, especially my grandchildren. Being close to home and friends all helps to make you feel better which means you will get out of hospital quicker”.

Brian believes that Choose and Book is an improvement over the old fashioned way of referring patients and would recommend Choose and Book to patients who have not used it before. “Choose and Book is big a step forward and in my mind the only way to do it.”

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