

**STAMMA**

**THE  
EXPERIENCES  
OF PEOPLE WHO  
STAMMER  
MAKING A GP  
APPOINTMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION

Set out overleaf are some of the experiences that people who stammer reported to us about their experience of making an appointment with their GP. These stories were gathered over June and July 2023.

Not all the experiences are bad, but many are. We believe at STAMMA that in order to support people who are dysfluent for any reason - whether they stammer, have Parkinson's, a recent heart attack - that all surgeries should ensure that staff are trained in dealing with people who are dysfluent, that there are channels other than phones for those needing to make an appointment, and that patients should be able to opt in to have their records flagged that they have a stammer, for example. More information can be found [here](#)

# MEMBER EXPERIENCES

At the start of 2023 we heard from a member who experienced a distressing attempt to make a GP appointment. We wondered about the experiences of other people who stammer, and sent a survey around to our members. These are some of the responses we had back. These include some positive responses, which show that practical changes are entirely possible. The stories have been reproduced below with the members' permission. If you would like any further detail, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We recommend that all GP surgeries ensure that appointments are available on more channels than simply the phone; that patients can give permission for their records to flag that they stammer, and that all those working within the surgery have basic training around stammering. We'd be pleased to share a short 5 minute videos for your staff. You can also download our briefing for GP surgeries [here](#).

## Ref GP\_2

<b>What happened</b>	I rang in many times about issues such as hayfever, excessive sweating and even mentioned mu stammer getting worse to the gp and receptionists. I asked for face to face appointments and was told it isn?t serious enough and it should be okay to sort out over the phone.
How did it make you feel	Very angry and upset
What would you like to have happened instead	I would have wanted a more easy way to make appointments and to see my doctors with results at the end.

## Ref GP\_3

<b>What happened</b>	Whenever I called the GP, everyone listens carefully, but sometimes they do not fully understand our queries, and as a result, our issues remain unresolved.
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## Ref GP-4

<b>What happened</b>	Often told the line is breaking up.
How did it make you feel	The practice manager rang me, apologised and said he would make a note of it on my notes.

What would you like to have happened instead	Patience and understanding
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#### Ref GP\_5

<b>What happened</b>	I was really struggling on the phone, like the kind of block where you're not even saying anything. And the GP receptionist was so rude/busy (wasn't sure which) that they just hung up on me. So I lost my place in the queue. Didn't end up calling again in the end I was so put off by the experience. It's probably one of the reasons I don't go to the GP until I have to.
How did it make you feel	Felt annoyed, not listened to and disenfranchised all in equal measure. For a health service, I would expect them to be more accepting.
What would you like to have happened instead	I would like for GP receptionists to be a bit more patient, I suppose. And I thought that just hanging up was a little harsh.

#### Ref GP\_6

<b>What happened</b>	I was met with impatience, rudeness and mocking when struggling to speak on the phone. In one instance, they thought I was trying to impersonate somebody else because I couldn't share my details fast enough. The overall barriers that constitute booking an appointment and giving details (something especially difficult as there's no alternative words to use) as well as telephone GP appointments leading to a reluctance to make the appointment in the first place form key barriers to healthcare. In addition, it's often difficult to share specific details or use terminology over the phone which can lead to a wasted, impaired or inaccurate appointment.
How did it make you feel	Embarrassed, and ashamed. Plus more reluctant to seek future appointments and help.
What would you like to have happened	A more inclusive way of booking that doesn't involve speech, in addition to increased training and awareness from receptionists and GPs.

## Ref GP-8

### What happened

I have lived with a stutter for as long as I can remember. It has been my constant, often unwanted, companion through all the years, an invisible hurdle that I have to cross daily.

It was a few years ago, when I developed persistent cough and fatigue, that I knew I had to book an appointment with a GP. I had no choice but to call because the online booking system wasn't available then. I knew what I was signing up for - the struggle to be understood, the difficulty in explaining symptoms over the phone, the possible ridicule - but I needed to see a doctor.

With my heart pounding, I dialed the number, only to be greeted by a brisk, impatient voice at the other end. I began to speak, but my stutter was particularly bad that day. The receptionist cut me off several times, clearly frustrated by my pauses and repetitions. I felt rushed, as though I was an inconvenience.

Things took a turn for the worse when I heard laughter at the other end. I was crushed. The humiliation was unbearable, and I hung up without completing the call. I felt ostracized, misunderstood, and dejected. The incident left such a profound impact on me that I decided not to call again, despite my worsening health.

I eventually visited a walk-in clinic after delaying for two weeks. But the entire experience left me with a sense of dread and fear around booking GP appointments.

Booking systems should be more accommodating and compassionate. Not all patients are the same, and not everyone can communicate effectively over the phone. I hope my story can serve as a wake-up call for necessary changes and provide a better understanding for people with speech impediments.

We need more patient, empathetic voices on the other end of the phone, and multiple ways of communication - online, emails, or text, as alternatives to calling. These are not luxuries; they are necessities. No one should have to risk their health because they fear the booking process. It's high time to effect these changes and ensure that healthcare is inclusive for all.

How did it make you feel

What I would have wanted instead was a more understanding, patient, and accommodating system. For

starters, having alternatives to telephone booking would have been incredibly beneficial. An online booking system or email method that allows me to book appointments without the need for verbal communication would have saved me the anxiety and distress.

The GP practice staff, especially those handling calls, should be trained to understand and cater to the needs of patients with communication difficulties like stammering. They should have been aware of the fact that rushing me or laughing at my condition would only exacerbate my stress and anxiety.

If I was still required to book over the phone, I would have appreciated a patient receptionist who would give me the time and space to express my needs without interruption or judgement. I should not have to feel like a burden for something I cannot control.

Furthermore, it would have been helpful to have a system in place to let them know beforehand that I have a stutter, like a note on my medical record. This would have ensured that anyone I interacted with was aware of my situation and could have made the necessary accommodations.

The ideal situation would be one where I felt heard, understood, and treated with the same dignity and respect as any other patient, regardless of how I speak. We need to create an environment where everyone feels safe and secure seeking medical help. I truly believe it's possible and necessary to achieve this.

What would you like to have happened instead

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### Ref GP\_9

<b>What happened</b>	While Calling for GP appointment i instantly repeated words but another side handle me with patience.. so I am succeed in GP appoint.
How did it make you feel	I feel so bad I hate myself for that movement
What would you like to have happened instead	I suddenly rush all words my mind while speaking basically we are not clear in words what to explain so we automatically loss of confidence while speaking

### Ref GP\_10

<b>What happened</b>	I have some good news about contacting my GP. I use email to make the appointments. Staff were more than willing to work with me via email. And when I see my GP, I take a written description of my condition and I am very thorough with my text. I've been doing this for years because I can barely speak, and I have noticed that every time, my GP asks if she can keep what I have written and it goes directly into my file. She REALLY appreciates my written reports because she doesn't have to write a summary of our appointment for my records. She just adds my written note. This system has me never forgetting anything as well. So my poor speech has actually improved my working relationship with my GP.
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How did it make you feel

Fabulous, because there is a silver lining in every seemingly negative experience in my opinion. Yes, I struggle to speak, but my disability has improved my relationship with my GP.

**Ref GP-11**

**What happened**

My GP practice used to have a super accessible booking system (online through web or app access) and I could book my appointments as necessary in a way which suited me (noting that I struggle to speak on the phone normally and when I am ill it becomes even harder or impossible). The NHS is great and I appreciate the unprecedented pressure they are under but the stress of having to force people to make a challenging phone call to get the help that you need when you are at your sickest either blocks people who stammer getting the care they need or makes them sicker (the trauma is real). This isn't good enough, especially when the NHS already have the available accessible online booking systems so I am grateful for Stamma for pursuing this cause.

During COVID, booking systems changed and they opted to turn off online bookings. When I asked when this will be put on they have said it is still under review (for the past year) and even when I challenged them, clearly stating my challenges - they confirmed that the system still works and can do online bookings however they are opting to limit GP/ nurse bookings to telephone only (note that you can still online book limited appointments like blood tests). Not that the staff have informally told me that they have the option to allow some (or all) patients to access online bookings but have chosen not to revert back to this system and I have also informally heard that this system also allows them better control to prevent people from booking appointments (i.e. you are not sick enough to see a GP or you should go and rather see pharmacist/ A&E for your condition) but it is a super inaccessible process for us folks with a stammer and needs to change.

I have submitted an official NHS complaint twice with no follow-up to date (around 4 months ago).

How did it make you feel

Nothing



What would you like to have happened instead

Turn back on online bookings - even if it is an opt in system (which can be requested online though of course).

## Ref GP\_12

### What happened

I always worry about contacting my GP to either make appointments or to get results. Before Covid it was easier as appointments were available on myGP app to took most of the stress and anxiety away from the situation. But now the appointments are no longer available and getting telephoning takes longer as there's usually a long queue on the phone waiting to be answered which just increases the anxiety whilst waiting for my turn in the queue going over and over in my mind what I need to say or ask especially if the call doesn't get answered and I have to phone them again and get back in the queue. Then when I do manage to get through to someone they then ask name and date of birth which I dread and always get stuck on. I sometimes will tell them at the start of the conversation I stammer and may get stuck and go quiet so please don't hang up. It's still not easy sometimes to get what I need and usually feel I'm being hurried along so they can answer the next call. And usually now what happens is you get an appointment for a telephone consultation which then means I then have to worry about a future phone call and on the day of the appointment start stressing and getting anxious about the phone ringing and hoping I'm going to communicate clearly enough to make sure I get the right treatment etc as just recently the doctor thought I sounded out of breath on the phone and wanted me to have chest X-ray because she thought i sounded like I had a chest infection and said no I was just finding using the phone difficult because of my stammer and eventually she offered me a face to face appointment. If that had been offered right at the beginning when I rang for an appointment it would have caused a lot less stress and anxiety. Then when the appointment involves being referred for blood tests etc I'm told give the gp a call in a week or two to get the results and they anxious cycle starts again and sometimes I've either not bothered getting the results thinking that if something was found that needed treatment they would ring me and if I don't hear from them

	I assume everything is all fine or if I'm passing the surgery I go in and request the results instead of phoning them.
How did it make you feel	Stressed and anxious
What would you like to have happened instead	Ideally make appointments available on the app or offer a face to face appointment when first contact is made

### Ref GP\_13

<b>What happened</b>	The build up created by the long waiting time for a call to be answered makes my stammer worse. due to my stammer I limit the conversation and tend to be fobbed off, ending up without an appointment yet again.
How did it make you feel	horrid, very upset, as if i did not matter
What would you like to have happened	a little bit of patience from the call handler/receptionist.

### Ref GP-14

<b>What happened</b>	Basically'!! Once the told me that they could listen me properly because the signa from my phone but it wasnt my phone, it was me stammering! My stammer is worst on the phone . I had many problems,when i callee them
How did it make you feel	It was during the covid . When i called the GP and when i was talking by phone with the doctor
What would you like to have happened instead	I think we should get a booking online

### Ref GP\_16

<b>What happened</b>	When trying to make appointments for my elderly mother to see a doctor, I called her local surgery to try to get some information and advice. It was a tricky and delicate situation because my mother was developing dementia and did not think she needed to see a doctor but my family knew she needed to be seen. As typical for that surgery, the receptionist was incredibly impatient, sighing and huffing because I obviously wasn't speaking quickly enough for her which instantly made my stammer worse! I had waited in the
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	<p>queue for about 15 minutes so my tention was building knowing that when it was my turn I would have to be clear.</p> <p>But because of the uncaring attitude and butting in of the receptionist, I ended up giving up and having to ask somebody else to call.</p> <p>I felt horrible because my mother really needed an appointment, i needed help! I was only visiting my mother for a short time and now this impatient receptionist put a block in our way due to nothing else but her own ignorance about stammerers. It shouldn't be happening in this day and age.</p>
How did it make you feel	
What would you like to have happened	I would have liked a receptionist who actually understands that people stammer, and they need to be patient!!

### Ref GP-18

<b>What happened</b>	To be honest I usually get a relative to ring on my behalf or I go into the surgery and make an appointment. It is difficult to get a face to face appointment with a doctor. Because of this if I think I need immediate attention I go straight A and E and the service is fantastic.I needed this last Monday
How did it make you feel	As described. Something to add. If I have a telephone conversation with a doctor I always let someone else initially take the phone and inform them that I have a stammer. This then makes the phone call easy. Not so much doctors but some people confuse a stammer with being drunk or stupid.
What would you like to have happened instead	Nothing I could not have experienced better service in a friendly atmosphere. My stammer was not a problem.

### Ref GP\_19

<b>What happened</b>	One of my worst experiences of inappropriate medical staff was when our third child was born. She was premature and she and her mother had been transferred to a nursing home. I went to visit but did not know which ward to go to so I went to the reception where a senior nurse was talking to three young nursing staff. I asked the senior nurse which ward my wife was on and stammered. She burst out laughing and turned to the others expecting
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them to share the joke. Though I've stammered since I was about 3 years old, sometimes quite severely, I am frequently very fluent when angered as I was in this case. I gave her both barrels and calmly but acerbically told her what I thought of her behaviour and how she should be ashamed of herself in the position that she held. I was not sorry that I reduced her to tears and she looked suitably chastised.

When I was younger I found using the telephone almost impossible and my wife usually made GP appointments for me if I needed one. Nowadays I do use the phone and I make my own appointments. Once I've got through the queue I usually find doctors' receptionists not too bad. Sometimes they are grumpy and abrupt but frequently they are willing to give me time. I do get a bit worked up waiting on the phone but I think none-stammering people do too. I have been cut off when I cannot speak but when I call again I tell them what they have done.

Medics and their support staff need more tolerance and training like the rest of society and work places. I know it is not always easy but whenever inappropriate reactions and laughter results from stammering we do need to be proactive and call it out. People who stammer should be outspoken and I think STAMMA should encourage members to be more reactive to discrimination. If we cannot speak and express our grievances at the time of the discrimination we should write emails, texts or letters to complain. Every time.

How did it make you feel

Not good but I had some satisfaction in knowing I had spoken my mind. However, a joyous occasion was initially spoiled.

What would you like to have happened instead

I would like to have been treated in a decent manner with patience and understanding.

## Ref GP\_20

### What happened

Had an initial telephone call with a doctor at my surgery - it being the only way to speak with a doctor at the time. As a result of the call, the doctor wanted to examine me (which I had already told them he would need to do when I booked the telephone call) and so I

<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened</p>	<p>went in to his surgery to see him the next day for a second, newly booked appointment.</p> <p>The telephone call felt rushed, obviously to screen out those that did not require face to face appointments, and in my case was a waste of everyone's time due to my condition, which I knew required a face to face appointment.</p> <p>When I eventually got to see the doctor, the situation was resolved quickly and satisfactorily.</p> <p>I felt ignored, not listened to, like I was being slotted in to their process, whether it was required or not. "Only the doctor (not the patient) can decide whether a face to face appointment is required or not. If we always offer them when a patient asks, doctors will be having too many unnecessary face to face appointments."</p> <p>My reason for avoiding the telephone appointment on this occasion was not because of my stammer, but I do my best generally to avoid telephones as much as I can, because of my stammer. It causes problems when people can't see me struggling to speak, which causes us to keep interrupting each other or talking over each other, which I feel I end up carrying the blame for.</p> <p>To see a doctor face to face when I first made the appointment, as I had requested.</p>
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**Ref GP-21**

<p><b>What happened</b></p> <p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened instead</p>	<p>I find it difficult talking to people on the phone, who are strangers. I think their should be a text phone service, I ask my partner to ring for me. Some people don't seem to have the patience to listen.</p> <p>Awquard</p> <p>Be able to talk without it being stressful</p>
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**Ref GP\_24**

<p><b>What happened</b></p>	<p>I have had a prescription for a controlled drug for the past 5 years. Every year I have to have a review and this year the pharmacist has added a note to my prescription saying 'speech was slow, CHECK BEFORE ISSUING'. I am</p>
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<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened instead</p>	<p>now worried that I will lose access to a prescription that I need due to worries that I am abusing the drug.</p> <p>Disheartened and anxious about the future.</p> <p>I didn't self advertise, but would have happily mentioned that I have a stammer if I was asked about it. Instead the pharmacist has assumed that my speech issues are as a result of the drug.</p>
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**Ref GP\_25**

<p><b>What happened</b></p>	<p>Trying to get an appointment for a referral to SALT took me many months as it was repeatedly deemed not important or urgent enough ( I could barely get a word out fluently). When I explained to the receptionist that it was having a negative impact on my mental health she said had I tried the local nhs mental health service - I am afraid I replied 'why are they doing speech therapy now as well'?.</p> <p>When I did eventually get an appointment the GP said 'what do you think is making it worse' and 'have you tried singing'?. I have stammered since I was 3 (I am now in my late 40's) and found myself becoming quite irate at his flippancy- I wanted a referral as my stammer had become an issue for me and I was finding putting sentences together hard work. I wish singing was the magic cure.</p> <p>Also pharmacies need to be more aware of stammering - they can become quite impatient when you are collecting a prescription and they ask for your address, they presume you haven't heard them and keep asking you for it even though you are trying to speak.</p>
<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened</p>	<p>To be listened to and believed that it was causing me issues. It was urgent to me.</p> <p>Also not to make flippant remarks about singing - if singing was a cure we would be doing it.</p>

**Ref GP-27**

<p><b>What happened</b></p>	<p>I had to phone my GP surgery to get some test results. The surgery told me the results, but when I stammered</p>
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	when trying to ask a follow up question, the person I spoke to said goodbye and hung up. I never bothered calling back to ask what I wanted to know...
How did it make you feel	Annoyed and frustrated
What would you like to have happened instead	For the person I spoke to to have a bit more patience and understanding

**Ref GP\_28**

<b>What happened</b>	I initially phoned STAMMA for advice and support, and they kindly directed me to my GP. I didn't have any issues getting an appointment with my GP. It was the language the doctor used. I was fluent, didn't say a great deal and was ashamed at having to ask for help when everything seemed hunky dory. I remember the doctor's words, exactly. 'I will book you in with someone who deals with the mind' I was shocked, didn't know what to say, had no idea what he meant. That was the only information I got. I remember thinking there was nothing wrong with my mind and he has misunderstood me. He asked me if this was ok. I wanted to ask more but didn't know what to ask for, and I also didn't say much, in case I stammered. I mumbled yes.  I remember thinking at the time that I was not going to see this person who deals with the mind, and I wished I hadn't gone to the doctor in the first place.
How did it make you feel	I felt shocked, numb, gutted
What would you like to have happened instead	The use of different language from the doctor and an explanation of what is entailed. I had no choice in who I went to see. In fact, I had no idea who else I could have seen. This could have helped me make an informed decision

**Ref GP\_30**

<b>What happened</b>	I phoned for an appointment told none left and ring again the following day given the wrong time so had to phone again the following day. struggling each time to speak and offered a phone appointment. They can hear I am struggling to speak and ask lots of questions.
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How did it make you feel	I just wanted to scream why are you making it so hard for me.
What would you like to have happened	We will text you to offer an appointment so you dont have to struggle to speak on the phone

**Ref GP-31**

<b>What happened</b>	I Stutter. It not very easy to speak on the phone because people can't Hear stuttering. When we I ring up. When I was about 4 years of age. I had a serious illness called Encephalitis. Which left me with epilepsy. and it effected my speech. I stuttered between every word. But I am not as bad now. But now I am 72. And my speech seems to be getting worse again.
How did it make you feel	It is hard to explain that. I feel it would be a lot easier to explain myself, in person. Compared to what it asks you below. I would not like to be contacted. By phone due to my speech. And it also effects my understanding of quite of things.
What would you like to have happened instead	I never had this serious illness. And slowed my reactions down.

**Ref GP\_33**

<b>What happened</b>	I always use a Relay UK to make some appointment. Phone conversation is too stressful for me.
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**Ref GP\_34**

<b>What happened</b>	I went to get my prescription at the doctor's surgery and I struggled to tell them why I was there and what my name was. I was already anxious which made my speech even less fluent. Then they asked which medication I was after and I didn't get past the first syllable before they finished the word for me. In the end they didn't even have my prescription so I went through all that for nothing. I cried when I got home.
How did it make you feel	Embarrassed, uncomfortable and anxious.



What would you like to have happened	If there was a form to fill out to explain what you wanted that could help.
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**Ref GP-37**

<b>What happened</b>	When I make appointment to see Doctor I need to phone between 8 & 9 in morning, and most times get through quickly,
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What would you like to have happened instead	Have bigger time slot to make appointment for seeing Doctor or Nurse,
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**Ref GP\_40**

<b>What happened</b>	Since using the telephone to book an appointment, is a long drawn out event. I normally pop in after work to book an appointment face to face, or I post them a letter, to make an appointment, and ask them to use my home answer phone.
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How did it make you feel	This is just normal for me. It is just one of those things you have to work around.
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What would you like to have happened instead	Because there is normally one person on the phone line, if you don't phone up very early you will miss all of the appointments. Having more persons on the phones or having an on-line booking system would work.
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**Ref GP\_41**

<b>What happened</b>	Generally I will delay or not go to see my GP due to fear of making a call.
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What would you like to have happened	Ability for people with stammer to access a text service
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**Ref GP-42**

<b>What happened</b>	Where do I start? I can book and access my doctors via a my GP service-which is on line. You can choose a response- I choose email. Last year I was in a very very dark place when I needed access to the doctors for a health concern. Asked for an email response- didn't get one. I kept saying to the doctor email me I don't like phones. The doctor said he didn't have time to email me and threatened to cancel my request. I landed in hospital after that with a doctor who refused to speak to me and
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<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened instead</p>	<p>would only speak to my husband as he didn't have the time. Since then the GP supposedly have put in measures to ensure that this doesn't happen again. Last week I put in another gp request. I had 2 phone calls which I didn't answer. They were from a locum who choose to ignore my notes and call me. One rather sharp email to the reception sorted this out but again I'm not in a good place and it could have gone really badly wrong.</p> <p>Suicidal</p> <p>To listen to my choice of communication method. It may be faster for him to phone me but its a huge trigger for me.</p>
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**Ref GP\_43**

<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened instead</p>	<p><b>What happened</b> It's difficult with most phone calls, but what helps me, is to say to the operator at the beginning of the call that I have a slight stammer, takes the pressure off at once. Telling them at once, mostly a positive reaction. Companies that use computer no person answering , I cancel the contracts I have with them and tell them why.</p> <p>Tell the operator at once before having to give your name.</p>
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**Ref GP\_44**

<p>How did it make you feel</p> <p>What would you like to have happened</p>	<p><b>What happened</b> When I rang to make an apmt I was offered a telephone one so I mentioned I would prefer a face to face as I stammer. Immediately I was offered a face to face one.</p> <p>Positive, as this was a new GP surgery for us as our previous one had closed down</p> <p>Offered a face to face one without asking.</p>
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**Ref GP-45**

<p>How did it make you feel</p>	<p><b>What happened</b> GP surgery have it on record I stammer, I'm able to book appts via email.</p> <p>Appreciative</p>
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### Ref GP\_46

<b>What happened</b>	endless waiting in the phone queue, and being cut off because i can't speak quick enough or the auto machine doesn't understand me. until I've just given up trying now! this has been happening for a long time {worse since covid}.
How did it make you feel	just like the automated utility company lines I have given up trying. after nearly 70 years of stammering i just don't have the energy anymore but i would like to see an improvement for the younger generation so they can have a better chance of equal treatment
What would you like to have happened instead	be able to make an appointment in the surgery, so the stammer is less likely to be bad. the above date is only a rough guess but the year is correct around my 65th birthday !

### Ref GP\_48

<b>What happened</b>	I genuinely have a good experience when phoning my GP. I may stammer a bit but I have never found the reception team to be impatient or to make fun of me
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### Ref GP-49

<b>What happened</b>	<p>I have had a stammer for over forty years.</p> <p>I find the present system where everything is done by telephone to be incredibly challenging. Even trying to call for an appointment makes me nervous.</p> <p>After waiting at least twenty minutes to speak to the receptionist. I was told by the receptionist that she couldn't hear me and I should speak clearly. I replied that I had a speech impairment and cannot speak clearly.</p> <p>She then she we would put the phone down on me, was that ok? Clearly, it was not ok as I was not offered any alternative way to make an appointment by email or online booking system and had just wasted at least twenty minutes on hold.</p> <p>Luckily after saying my date of birth for the fourth time she heard that.</p> <p>However, this was a stressful experience and if she actually had put the phone down on a patient with a stammer, as she had threatened to do, but for the miracle of the fourth dob, it is unacceptable.</p>
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	<p>Equally, it is unlawful and potentially discriminatory for the practice not to make reasonable adjustments both on request pursuant to sections. 20 and 21 of Equality Act 2010 and anticipatory pursuant to s.29 (7) Equality Act 2010 to the booking system for patients with speech impairments. Also staff require better training when dealing with patients with speech impairments.</p> <p>Given my lifetime of stammering, it is really demeaning and humiliating for people to put the phone down on you if you stammer.</p> <p>Despite my complaint which has been copied verbatim above, my GP practice has not been put in place any alternative practice.</p>
How did it make you feel	upset but not surprised. Apprehensive when booking further appointments with the GP.
What would you like to have happened instead	A system to book online. An opportunity to book in the practice or for the receptionist to be understanding when I said I had a speech impairment.

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<b>What happened</b>	<p>The fact I have a stammer is written on the front screen of my medical records (well its supposed to be but I believe that its not) but I still get mocked everytime I ring for a GP appointment! The most recent occasion when I called them, they actually refused to speak to me about my own medical condition as I was "being hesistent" when giving my date of birth so they believed I was not the patient. When I explained to them I have a stammer I was told to call back a different day for being "rude".</p>
How did it make you feel	Angry and infuriated that I still continue to be mocked for my disability.
What would you like to have happened instead	Have it somewhere on my medical records that I have a stammer, so I do not need to explain myself my disability every time I contact the GP. Also it would be great if GP receptionists could have more EDI training so they can recognise this problem and not ask so many questions, or mock me and others like me in the future.

If you would like to arrange training for staff or would like to discuss the contents of this paper further, please contact us at [hello@stamma.org](mailto:hello@stamma.org).

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