



# INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR RUNNING VIDEO GROUPS WITH NEAR ME

This document applies to the beta version of “Near Me Video Groups” for use by health & care teams in NHS Scotland.



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For the purpose of this guidance anyone from Health, Care or the Public sector who is involved in running the group will be referred to as a **Service Provider**. The term **Caller** describes the person who attends the group, the attendee or participant, and may refer to a patient, client, interpreter, carer, customer or service user etc.

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## INTRODUCTION

Near Me is transforming the way people access services in Scotland. It is a video calling platform used widely in Health, Social Care & the Public Sector powered by Attend Anywhere®. To date it has been used to support video calls between patients & clinicians with the option of being able to invite an additional 3 participants into a call.

Attend Anywhere® has released the option of “Group Consulting” which can accommodate multiple callers. A separate Group Consulting waiting area will allow you to invite up to 30 participants per Video Group. Up to 25 callers can be viewed on screen at the same time with the option to scroll down through the callers. Multiple colleagues and staff in the role of service provider can also join to support the delivery and running of the group.

From here the term “Near Me Video Group” will replace “Group Consulting”.

The Near Me Video Group platform is very similar to a standard Near Me waiting area platform for both providers and patients. You can send the entry link to callers by SMS or email and share your screen.

If you are new to Near Me or would like more general information, please see the section on Page 5: [General Information & Resources about Near Me](#).

## PROCESS

Many of the process steps involved in running a Near Me Video Call are similar to planning & conducting a Near Me Video Group. The graphic and tables below explore the steps which are unique to the Video Group functionality and those who are involved.



Plan & Schedule the Near Me Group	
<p>Person organising the Group.</p> <p>(This may or may not be the person running the group)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff who will be involved in delivering / facilitating the group are Near Me service providers and have access to the designated Near Me Group waiting area. More information about how to do this can be found in <a href="#">“General information &amp; resources about near me”</a></li> <li>• Decide upon the group attendees. Log into the group waiting area and see the “waiting area link section” for its joining URL (link).</li> <li>• Invite presenters and/or other group facilitators by sharing the link via email</li> <li>• Invite attendees by sharing the link via email (Bcc), text, website, or letter.</li> <li>• Share patient information leaflet <a href="#">appendix 1</a>. Local contact information can also be shared via the customisable Near Me information sheet. Your waiting area administrator can customise and upload this for service providers to download.</li> <li>• Make sure your patients are aware of ground rules and guidance that apply to virtual consultations. This may be locally agreed and will relate to short-notice cancellations, being on time, etc. See <a href="#">Patient Information – Group document</a></li> </ul>
Resources	 <p>Patient _Information_near-me</p>
Technical	Apply to your local Near Me Organisation Unit administrator to set up a waiting area see <a href="#">appendix 3</a> .

Start the Near Me Group on the day	
Person(s) running the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Log into the Near Me Video Group waiting area. This will be recognisable in your Near Me Waiting Area activity summary page, marked with a badge.</li> <li>• Make sure your environment is appropriate for the group i.e., no interruptions, etc.</li> <li>• Familiarise yourself with the “Group Consulting” functions – <a href="#">appendix 2</a></li> <li>• Gather the resources you need for the Near Me Video Group, make sure they are ready on your device to share when you need them.</li> <li>• Consider the optimum number of providers required to enable the group to run smoothly. For example one to deliver the content and one to support callers with any technical / support needs/make notes etc. NB additional Service Providers can join directly into the Near Me Video Group without being admitted via the waiting area.</li> <li>• Check the callers in the waiting area against your list of people invited.</li> <li>• Is everyone there? Do people need help joining or is a reminder required?</li> <li>• Follow local process for contacting callers who are not there. E.g. Will the co-presenter need to phone the callers who are not there?</li> <li>• Launch Group by Admitting callers</li> </ul>
People attending the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caller should have received, read, and understood any information provided and have consented to receive their consultation/treatment via the Near Me group link sent to them</li> <li>• Use the link to join the Near Me Group waiting area 5 minutes before the start of the session.</li> <li>• Join the call on mute and remain mute until they need to be heard. Muting again after.</li> </ul>
Resources	 <p>Service Provider_Information.</p>
Technical	Only one group can run at any one time from a Near Me Video Group waiting area. You can either timetable different groups at different times from one Group Waiting Area or request other waiting areas for specific groups

Run the Near Me Video Group	
Person(s) running the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Providers can disconnect unwanted callers before admitting all waiting callers</li> <li>• Admit or decline any late arrivals.</li> <li>• Remove callers from the Near Me Group once up &amp; running</li> <li>• They can also turn off the callers’ camera and/or microphone if needed.</li> <li>• Make sure the callers are aware of the ground rules and etiquette that applies to Near Me Video Group.</li> <li>• Look after yourself and have some water to hand. Have you scheduled a comfort break during the Video Group?</li> </ul>
People attending the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Callers can only see other callers by their initials however the Service Providers names are visible to all.</li> <li>• Minimise distractions at home such as television noise.</li> <li>• Avoid running other software programmes at the same time e.g. gaming &amp; video streaming. Understand the need to participate from a confidential space with good lighting - preferably front lit.</li> <li>• Minimise interruptions from others in the home environment.</li> <li>• Use the page refresh as first line action in connection &amp; technical difficulties</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Local agreement	Agree local process should the Near Me group fail for technical reasons. First, contact callers immediately and advise them to either refresh the page or re-join the call, to complete the Near Me Group or offered another group appointment at a later date.

End the Video Group	
Person(s) running the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End Near Me Video Group and inform callers about the feedback survey as they leave.</li> <li>• Note that any caller-related information should be updated within your patient / client record system separately.</li> </ul>
People attending the Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete end of call feedback survey.</li> </ul>

## EXAMPLES OF USE

- Group therapy or education for patients with similar diagnosis
- Peer support sessions such as cancer, diabetes, pain management etc.

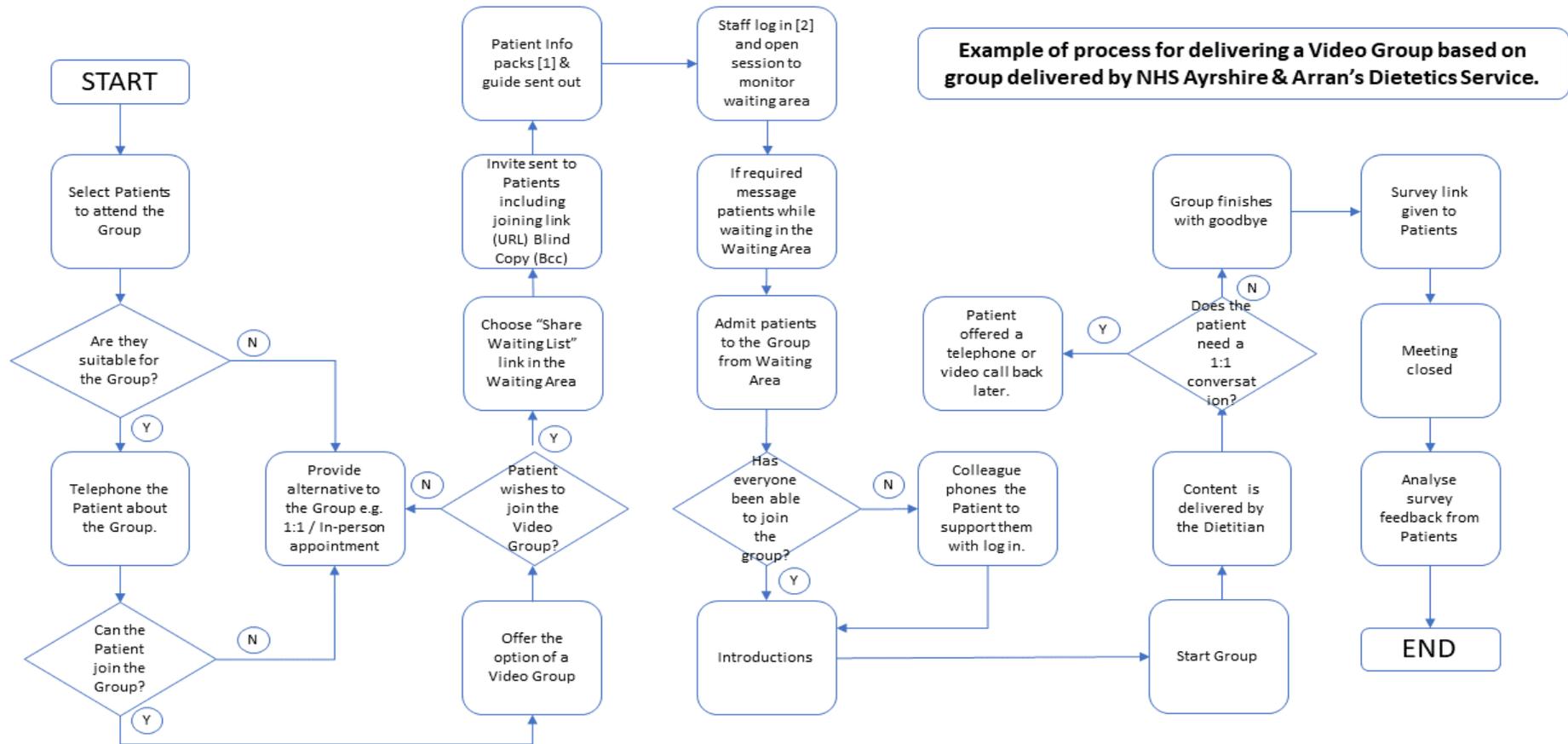
Clinicians should decide on the suitability of their patients to attend a Near Me Video Group by balancing the risks of not attending against those of attending.

[For more information see appendix 4.](#)

## GENERAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES ABOUT NEAR ME

1	If you are new to Near Me, visit <a href="#">this page</a> as an introduction and watch this <a href="#">short video</a> .
2	The video <a href="#">Using Near Me with callers</a> gives you an overview from the perspective of the service provider
3	Make a <a href="#">test call here</a> to see what Near Me looks like for a caller entering your waiting area Your PC, laptop, tablet, or phone will need access to a camera and microphone. (NB This is a demo link only).
4	<a href="#">This video</a> shows what your waiting area will look like when you are using it and some basic service provider instructions.
5	To learn more, view our range of resources i) Training videos <a href="#">here</a> ii) Practical guidance for using features <a href="https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/near-me/guides/">https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/near-me/guides/</a>
6	For technical advice or to book on a live training session please contact the Video Conferencing support team <a href="mailto:vc.support@nhs.scot">vc.support@nhs.scot</a>
7	For all other information please see the <a href="#">Near Me Website</a> or contact the team directly at <a href="mailto:nss.nearme@nhs.scot">nss.nearme@nhs.scot</a>

## EXAMPLE PROCESS MAP



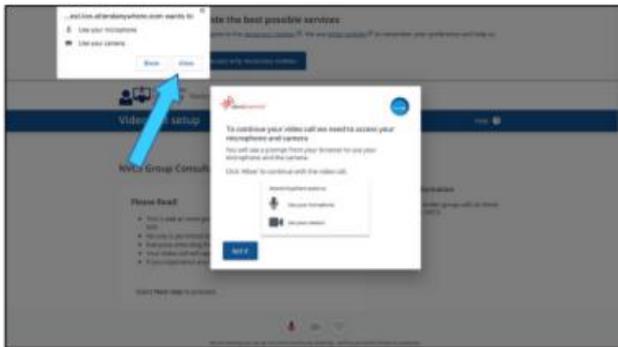
**Example of process for delivering a Video Group based on group delivered by NHS Ayrshire & Arran's Dietetics Service.**

[1] Pack Information can include: Information on group, dates, booking details, questionnaire etc.  
 [2] Use local protocol for setting presenters, microphone, camera & waiting area etc



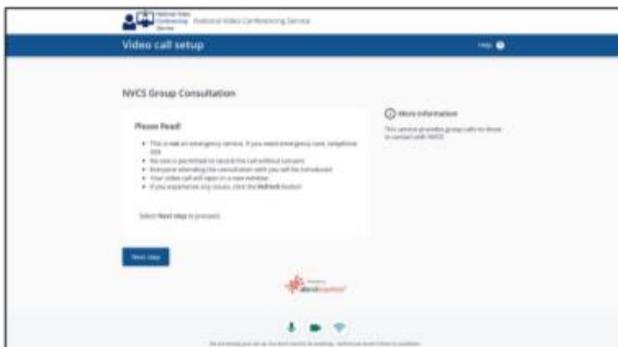
Email: [vc.support@nhs.scot](mailto:vc.support@nhs.scot)  
 Telephone: 01224 816 666

**Near Me: Group Calls (beta) – Caller Basics v.1.1**



Near Me calls automatically test your camera, microphone and network speed. If there are problems found, you'll see on-screen notifications.

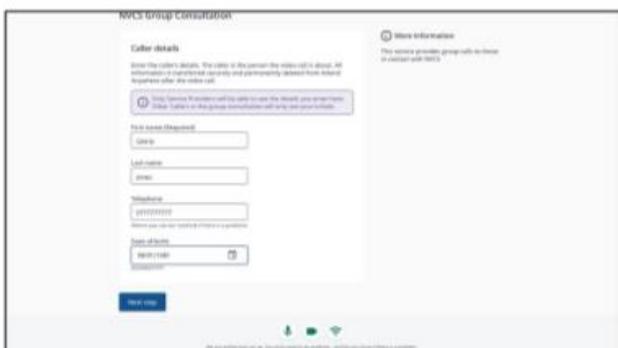
The first time you make a Near Me group call you will probably be presented with a pop-up message asking for use of your camera and microphone (blue arrow). Some Android devices ask for permission to record your video and audio. Please accept their use to continue.



Once camera/microphone have been detected, you'll see the group's name, information your Near Me provider wants you to read before joining and more information on their service.

If the name or information looks like it's for a different group than you expect, please contact your provider and ask them to text or email you a link for your group call.

Use the Next Step button to continue. You may have to scroll down to locate it.



You will be asked to fill in some details about yourself, to identify you to your Near Me provider. You may have to scroll down to see all the fields.

Apart from your Near Me provider(s), nobody else in the call will see any details except your initials.

Those details are only kept by the platform until the end of your call.

Use the Next Step button to continue.



If you agree to the Privacy Policy and Terms of Use, then tick the box to indicate, you can use the Enter Waiting Area button to join the group call.



While you wait to be admitted you'll see a screen like the one on the left. You may hear music and other messages too, depending on how your Near Me provider has set up the call.

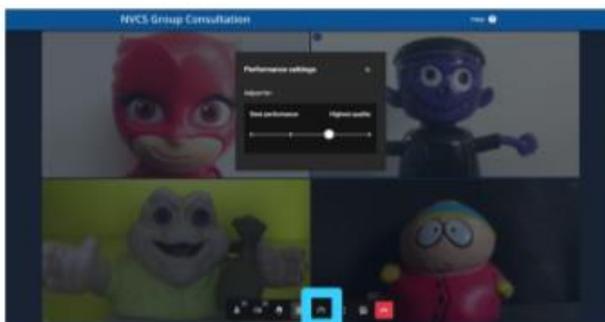
Once admitted, you'll see the others in the call, with a self-view at the top left.



Your microphone will be mute on entry.

When you wish to be heard, click the microphone icon at the left of the call-control bar (blue highlight). Muting your mic after is recommended. It can reduce audio feedback for you or others.

The call control bar auto-hides. If you can't see it, wiggle your mouse or, if using a tablet or mobile phone, click an unused part of the screen e.g the grey bars to the left/right or top/bottom of the callers.



Other call controls include layout change, perhaps to see just your provider, or call quality change - pictured. Using the speed control (blue highlight), to lower from highest quality, can improve your picture.

Should you wish to end your call, you can hang up using the red end call button at the right of the call control tab.

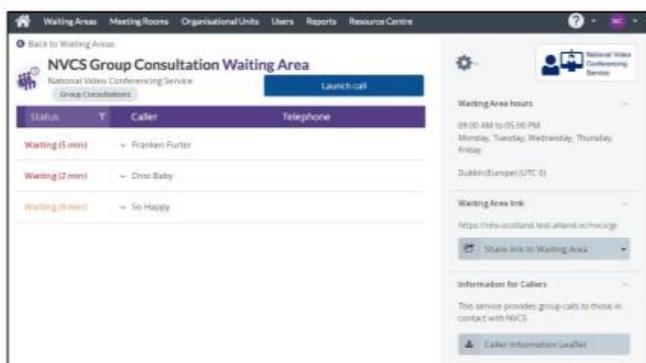
Should you encounter problems with your call, please contact your Near Me provider for assistance or to reschedule. Should you wish to attempt problem solving yourself, [this link](#) is a good place to start.

## APPENDIX 2 STAFF / SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION



Email: [vc.support@nhs.scot](mailto:vc.support@nhs.scot)  
Telephone: 01224 816 666

### Near Me: Group Calls (beta) – Service Provider basics v.1.2



Once logged in, if you have a choice of Waiting Areas, you'll see Group Consultation ones clearly labelled.

Functionality is similar to standard Near Me Waiting Areas, with you able to send the entry link to callers by [SMS](#) or [email](#).

N.B. You can't enter into a group call before you have callers in the call queue.

Once you have a caller or callers waiting, click the blue Launch Call button to enter the group call.



On entering, you're presented with a self-view, with a list of the callers waiting in the lobby area, to the right (yellow arrow).

Click Admit All to let them in. Their microphones, but not yours, will be muted on entry.

Call controls are at the bottom of the screen. They auto-hide but will reappear if you move your mouse (or tap, if using a tablet or phone).



If more callers arrive later, they'll appear in the lobby too (no prompt in this release).

When you admit them, participant names will be displayed below the lobby.

You, like other callers, will only see a caller's initials in the call window - when you hover over their image.

There are additional controls for each caller: accessed by clicking the three dots to at the top right of their tiles.

The end call options are in red.

## APPENDIX 3 GETTING YOUR VIDEO GROUP WAITING AREA SET UP

Points of note & who to contact		
1	Identify when you will be running your group	You can only run one group from one waiting area at one time. You can have as many groups as you like from that waiting area if they run one after the other. If you have two / multiple groups which will be on at the same time you will need multiple waiting areas.
2	What will you call the group waiting area?	If this is going to be used by multiple different groups, the name needs to be relevant to the services delivering the group as this will be on the communication to patients.
3	Apply to set up your waiting area	Your Near Me Organisation Unit Administrator will enable this. This may be the clinical / service lead who has set up your standard waiting areas, or it may be a service request through IT.
4	Identify which staff will be running the groups.	As you apply for your waiting area, please provide a list of the staff who will require service provider access.

## APPENDIX 4 RISK FACTORS TO CONSIDER

High Risk	Unknown Risk	Special Consideration
Medically unstable patients	New patients	Patients with sensory difficulties
Intoxicated patients	Unavailability of community response to a contingency plan	Patients with cognitive impairment
Actively aggressive patients	Unpredictable risk to self and others	Patients with incapacity
	An unsuitable home environment for assessment	Patients unable to engage over VC
	No telephone connection at patient's home for back up	Patients requiring an interpreter
	Inadequate technology or connection speed	Patients who decline