



Near Me: Group Calls – Service Provider, Detailed v3.0 (April 25)

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Back to Waiting Areas	as	Reports Resource centre	
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NHS Scotland	Group Consultations	Launch call	Waiting Area hours
Status T	Caller	Telephone	
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Naiting (1 min)	 Dino Baby 02/02/2002 	01224816666	London (Europe) (UTC +1)
Waiting (0 min)	 So Happy 03/03/2003 	01224816666	Test My equipment
			Waiting Area link
			https://nearme.vc/mu-gr1
			C Share link to Waiting Area
			Information for Callers

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

You cannot enter into a group call before you have callers* in your call queue. Once you do, click Launch call to start the session.

*To join other service providers before your callers arrive, all that's required is one of you using the Waiting Area's caller link on a smartphone. As soon as it's seen in the queue, you can launch the call.

eople Caller Admit All right. Z tain call (1) 🔿 A Mac Coyle (You) MC Service provider muted.

On entering, you'll receive a self-view and a list of your callers in the lobby area, to the

You can admit individual callers by clicking the \square by their name or drop unwanted callers with the \boxtimes .

Click Admit All to let all callers in at once.

On entry, all callers' microphones will be



If callers arrive once you have begun your session, you'll see an on-screen notification and they will appear in the lobby. If you have closed the right-hand pane, their arrival is indicated by a red dot on the People button.

Although you can see your callers' full names, default Waiting Area settings only allow a caller to see other callers' initials.

You can mute a caller's camera or microphone through the three dots in that caller's video tile or in the Callers pane. For their privacy, you cannot remotely unmute.

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Mic	Camera	Raise	Share	Chat	People	More	Leave	
Provider call controls								
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Your callers' controls								

Call controls

Call controls are permanently visible.

If using a smartphone or tablet you will not be able to screen share.

Your callers have similar controls but are unable to share screens regardless of what hardware they're using. Regardless of device used, they'll all be able to receive your shared content.



Microphone and camera mute/unmute buttons.



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Used to alert other users you'd like to speak.

Screen-sharing. You can choose either individual windows or other browser tabs (sharing a browser tab allows sharing of audio too). We'd advise against sharing your entire screen unless you're absolutely sure nothing would be shared you'd rather your callers didn't see, for instance your other caller's full names.

If available, the chat button allows you to send on-screen messages to those in the call. They will be able to respond to you too.

You and your callers will see messages at the top of the screen or in the right-hand pane. If you've closed the pane, clicking this will re-open it ready to start or respond to chat.

Before you launch your call, you can set your Waiting Area to enable or disable chat through your Waiting Area's group consultations settings (accessed through the cog at the top RHS of you Waiting Area Window).



The people button will open up the right hand pane if you have closed it. If that pane is closed, a red dot will appear on this button to alert you to a caller in your lobby. (You'll receive an on-screen notification too.)



The More button allows you to: hide your self-view; spotlight speaker – when clicked, the video tile of the person speaking goes almost full screen with other callers moving to small tiles by the side; choose a background for your call; mute all callers; open the breakout rooms tab in the right hand pane.

Choosing/changing a background and the renaming of breakout rooms can both be accessed before letting callers in from the lobby.

This release automatically creates breakout rooms for your call. Use the Rooms button to start using them.



Further Controls

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Each caller tile also gives you the ability to pin to stage. That makes the tile fill the call screen. You can also mute a

caller's mic or camera, if not already muted.

For caller privacy, you can't unmute your callers' cameras or microphones.



Browser Controls

If using Edge or Chrome, right clicking on a video tile and choosing Show all controls gives extra, browser-generated, controls at the bottom of the tile.

The most useful [yellow arrow], if Pin to stage still gives you too small a picture, allows the tile to fill your entire screen. To close, use the Esc key on your keyboard.



Breakout Rooms

Breakout rooms can be found in the People side bar. If that is closed you can access it through either the People button or directly through the Rooms button, accessible through the More button.





Should you wish, you can rename the rooms.

That can be done before admitting any of your callers or at any other time throughout the call.

When moved to a breakout room, your caller will receive a pop-up giving it's name.

To rename a room, choose rename from the button to the right of the room's name.

When you want to move callers from the main call to a breakout room, use the Move caller between rooms button.

You'll be presented by a list of callers and any other service provider, allowing you to choose their breakout room from a dropdown menu.

Once allocated, click Move callers now



There are simple Join and Leave buttons for yourself.

A list of a breakout room's participants is seen by clicking the arrow next to its name.

To return all in a breakout room to the main call, choose the Clear this room button from the room's 'three-dot' menu.

Chat from the main group is not seen within breakout rooms. Chat created within breakout rooms is not seen elsewhere.

Tips (many apply to both providers and callers)

If Providers would like to make a test call, please contact our help-desk on 01224 816666. We'll ask you to email your Waiting Area link to <u>vc.support@nhs.scot</u>, then join you as a caller.

There is information for callers, including the ability to make a test call into a standard Waiting Area at our public-facing site – <u>https://nearme.scot</u>.

As with all browser based video calls, many problems can be prevented from happening by clearing your browser's cache before your calls. It's simple and quick. See the first guide <u>here</u>.

We advise other applications that may use camera or microphone, or are heavy users of system resources, such as MS Teams, should be <u>completely shut down</u> before logging into Near Me.

Wired network connections, rather than wi-fi are preferable. Wired or wi-fi connections are often more reliable than mobile data (4G/5G). If using wi-fi, try to be reasonably near your wireless access point (for callers, that's most likely to be their broadband modem). If forced to use mobile data, a location near a window may provide a more stable connection.

If working from home, even with decent broadband provision, please ensure others on the same connection refrain from online video streaming or gameplay while you take part in the call.



If using a tablet or smartphone, prop up your device on its longest edge for the best calling experience.

[Mobile devices can't be used to share content but they can receive it.]

If working away from NHS premises, remote access methods such as VPNs, DirectAccess, etc. can often give problems with WebRTC calls. If working from home, it's perfectly acceptable to use a personal device for the video call while using your NHS laptop for data entry. Callers, using corporate devices, may have the similar VPN problems. They may have better calls using personal devices.

Background blurs or pictures can affect call quality, such as audio sync, quite badly, especially on older or slower devices. It can also stop working, revealing your background.

Camera or microphone can't be accessed? Try: <u>clearing browser cache</u>; closing applications such as MS Teams (then a cache clear); swapping USB port, if the camera/mic is USB; restarting PC/laptop (remembering to shut down applications such as MS Teams if they restart automatically, before restarting your browser). If camera/microphone access continues to give problems, you should contact your IT help-desk – they will be able to access your system remotely and help.

If a group call is to have more than one Provider and you'd like to enter into the call before your callers arrive, why not use a mobile phone's browser to join the lobby using your caller link. Once the phone is in the lobby, providers can launch the call before any real callers arrive. Once in, the providers can just drop the mobile from the lobby.

At present (April 2025), the maximum run-time for a Group Consultation is four hours. Don't forget to schedule comfort breaks. When one is due, remind your callers they'll have to re-join then end the call for everyone. When ready to rejoin, they'd refresh their browser tab, enter their details again and they can rejoin. You'll get a further four hours on rejoining.

Group Waiting Areas can now hold up to 250 callers. However, larger groups can be harder to chair. The number of callers' video tiles you'll be able to see on-screen at any point in time depends on a number of factors including you available bandwidth, screen resolution and orientation. You may want to consider relaying meeting room etiquette to your callers at the beginning of your call, such as keeping mics mute when not speaking and using the raise hand button when they'd like to be given time to speak.

If using Teams is absolutely essential while using Near Me, please consider running it <u>within a</u> <u>browser tab</u>, rather than using the client.

Should your callers continue having problems accessing your group, after they've tried the basic problem solving above, you can contact us to call them and provide assistance, if thought appropriate. We require a first name, telephone number and a time range you've agreed with them, between 10:00 and 16:00, Monday to Friday. We'll try to have your caller able to join your next group call. Callers should not be given our contact details or asked to contact us directly.

Provider resources – <u>https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/near-me</u> Caller resources – <u>https://nearme.scot</u>