

Special words used by the medical profession

Patient – someone who needs, or who is seeking, a medical assessment or treatment (they may be impatient if they have to wait a long time !!!)

In-patient – a patient who is staying overnight in hospital

Out-patient – a patient who is being treated at a hospital during a short visit, not overnight

A&E = Accident & Emergency. The part of a hospital treating patients suffering an emergency need

E.N.T. = Ear, nose & throat specialist part of a hospital dealing with head and neck problems (except eyes and some muscular problems).

Triage - a preliminary assessment of a patient that will determine the urgency and/or type of treatment

Practitioner – a trained medical person (e.g. a doctor or nurse) {they are not ‘practicing’ in the same way as you might ‘practice’ the piano!}

Practice – a group of practitioners (e.g. the people who work in the doctor’s offices)

GP – a General Practitioner (the kind of doctor who you go to for everything except an emergency)

Surgery – the building where the GP and colleagues “practice” (but no surgery happens here!)

Practice Nurse – a nurse who is based in a GP’s surgery

Appointment – a time when you are asked to visit the GP (or other medical person)

Specialist – a doctor who specializes in an aspect of medicine (he/she doesn’t work in all areas). E.g. Paediatrician, Surgeon, gastroenterologist, psychiatrist, obstetrician, ophthalmologist

Clinician -

Referral – a GP may ask a hospital-based specialist to make an appointment with you.

Ward – a room with beds in a hospital. There are surgical wards (where treatment involves ‘surgery’ (cutting!!)) and medical wards where treatment is non-surgical