

The iPLATO Friends & Family Test solution

An automated patient feedback collection and reporting tool

iPLATO Friends & Family Test (FFT) is an automated patient feedback collection and reporting tool, which follows the specific format of the NHS Friends and Family patient survey. A patient can anonymously provide feedback on their experience via SMS, a website, myGP app, NHS App or a paper form. At month-end, the system provides a report which complies with NHS requirements and provides additional information on how GP practices and PCNs can improve their services.

What is iPLATO FFT?

The NHS Friends and Family Test is now obligatory for all GP practices in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Developed in 2014 through collaboration with over 70 GP practices, iPLATO's Friends and Family Test product is a fully managed service. This service handles everything, from collecting and surveying patient responses to analyzing and reporting them, all in accordance with NHS regulations.

How does it work?

We use SMS polling and data messaging as the primary surveying tool. Both are proven communication channels that patients are familiar with, and both consistently yield excellent response rates. Patients who attend an appointment with the practice will receive the survey invitation on their mobile phone within 2-3 hours following the appointment. Certain appointment (slot) types, session clinics and session holders can be excluded from surveying if required.

To complement SMS and data messaging, we also provide other response mechanisms for patients to choose at their discretion, including:

- A web-based form accessed via the practice website or email
- A traditional paper-based survey through an in surgery 'ballot box'

There are two processes for collating the responses:

Automated Polling

- One-off configuration applied to the iPLATO system to tell it which appointment (slot) types to survey and which not to
- Patient attends appointment at the surgery
- iPLATO FFT automatically queues patients for Auto Polling at appointment end time +2hrs
- Two hours after the scheduled appointment end time, the patient will receive an invitation to answer the FFT questions. The invitation is sent by data message if the patient has an app installed (myGP or NHS App) and notifications enabled. If not, it is sent by SMS

Messages are **NOT** sent if one or more of the follow criteria are met:

- Patient appears in an exclusion list (blacklist)
- Patient has previously responded to the FFT survey (by SMS, paper, or other means) in last 90 days
- Patient has opted-out of practice messaging (iPLATO or surgery supplied opt-out list)
- The scheduled send time violates the practice watershed hours, in which case it will be deferred to the next available time

Monthly spend cap reached

Patient-Initiated Response Methods

Paper-based Feedback Card + Upload

- Patients receive a paper leaflet during their appointment or complete it in the waiting room.
- Patients can respond by filling out a survey and placing it in a 'ballot box' for processing by the surgery (using the manual upload tool in the iPLATO system).

Web/Email

- The surgery promotes its unique FFT website/portal for patient use. This URL can be added to information leaflets, general advertising, direct emails, SMS campaigns, practice waiting room displays, etc.
- Patients access the surgery's unique FFT portal to submit their survey responses.

Reporting

- Automatically generated CQRS reports are emailed to the GP Practice monthly (contact iPLATO for a Sample Monthly Report).
- Report details include:
 - Executive Summary: AI-driven algorithm extracts key aspects from the data for a concise monthly summary.
 - NHS Reporting Summary: Contains necessary details for full NHS reporting submission.
 - MIS Report: Provides a statistical breakdown of captured results, including patient demographic analysis.
 - Free Text Response Detail: A comprehensive list of ALL patient responses with appropriate consent status. No patient identifiable data is included in this report.

Why is the iPLATO FFT better than other questionnaire/form builders?

- Completely anonymous
- Fully managed service
- Automated reports that meet NHS requirements
- No additional SMS costs
- Accessible – responses accepted via multiple channels – SMS, data message, website, email, paper form
- Comprehensive CQRS approved monthly report provided
- Practice specific custom questions
- Configurable message templates
- Report features a Gen-AI generated executive summary
- Secure – Cyber Essentials Plus certified

Other solutions...

- Not fully anonymous (many capture patient data such as email or IP address)
- SMS credits need to be funded by the practice/PCN/ICB
- Data can occasionally be stored outside the UK
- Web forms only, no SMS replies or paper-based forms
- No NHS specific reports provided
- Reports are not automated and need to be built and downloaded
- Very rarely fully managed – practice intervention required

System features

No reporting worries

iPLATO FFT meets all the NHS reporting requirements and delivers an online monthly data pack for submission by the GP practice. Our system uses the standard FFT question wording but can also include customised questions to get the feedback that's most useful to your practice/PCN.

Anonymous

Provides an opportunity for people who use the practice to give anonymous feedback through, excluding where it would be inappropriate to do so.

Inclusive

Through `multi-channel` patient communication (using SMS, data message, website/email, or traditional paper-based survey) iPLATO FFT supports collection of feedback from all patients - not just those with a mobile phone or internet access.

No capital investment needed

Web sign-up and free, simple service setup handled by our installation team over the phone (for new iPLATO users). Current iPLATO users can start using iPLATO FFT immediately.

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No staff or training burdens

We handle all the back-end electronic data collection and analysis so no wasted time for busy receptionists or back-office staff and no training required either.

No setup costs

Simple service setup handled by our installation team over the phone (for new iPLATO users). Current iPLATO users can start using iPLATO FFT immediately via a simple phone call.

High response rates

By passing data collection on our `Auto Polling` feature and complementing it with other channels, you will systematically generate higher response rates that greatly exceed those of paper based FFT systems or kiosks.

Simple subscription, no contracts

The service is provided on a rolling monthly basis and there are no long-term contracts. Cancel at any time. Our simple Direct Debit payments mean reduced administration time.

Capped costs

Our monthly package means no run-away costs and you never pay for more than you commit to.

Onboarding

Cloud-based, iPLATO FFT is easy to deploy anywhere, either as a standalone product, or as a component of the wider iPLATO Platform.

Setup

All setup for participating surgeries can be completed remotely. Depending on the Principal Clinical System, setup can be completed within 2-14 days. Where applicable, and if requested, a bespoke launch project including user training can be undertaken.

User Support

- Telephone and email support during office hours
- Average support resolution time is under 10 minutes
- Online and face to face training available