

Silicon Practice Foundation + Elements Service Definition Document for G-Cloud 15

Silicon Practice: Digital Front Door for Patients

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About us

At Silicon Practice, we bring nearly two decades of expertise in supporting GP practices, driven by our passion for improving patient access and simplifying the challenges faced by healthcare professionals. Trusted by nearly 1,000 GP practices across the UK, we are proud to introduce innovative solutions designed to reshape the future of primary care.

An intuitive website and online consultation and communication (OCVC) platform is no longer a luxury - it's essential. By empowering patients with seamless access to healthcare services and information, these tools enhance patient satisfaction while significantly reducing your administrative workload.

Our cutting-edge solutions redefine how you deliver care, equipping your practice to provide faster, easier access for patients while managing demand with greater efficiency. The results are transformative: reduced pressure on staff, streamlined workflows, and a higher standard of care that minimises wait times and improves the overall patient experience.

At the heart of our mission is a commitment to revolutionise how patients connect with vital healthcare services. Together, we can shape a new era of primary care - one where every interaction is simpler, smarter, and more effective. Let us help you lead the way.



Introducing Foundation - your digital front door

Foundation is a robust Website Patient Navigation System, built from years of expertise in primary care web design. Aligned with the NHS Design System and Content Style Guide, it incorporates patient and practice feedback alongside tested improvements.

With specialised NHS blocks, a mobile first design and intuitive drag-and-drop editing, Foundation ensures seamless integration with NHS resources, enabling efficient online consultations and self help access. Its user friendly interface simplifies navigation, streamlines tasks and enhances patient engagement.

Foundation is more than a website - it's a powerful digital platform designed to transform patient care and practice efficiency.

Key Benefits of Foundation:

- Improved Patient Access and Care
- Increased Operational Efficiencies
- Consistent Standards Across Multiple Sites
- Enhanced Compliance and Quality Assurance
- Better Patient Engagement
- Optimised Online Consultations
- Scalability Across Healthcare Networks
- Simplified Content Management
- Improved Patient Outcomes
- Future-Proof Technology



Transforming Patient Care with a Smart, Engaging GP Practice Website

In today's digital era, a highly usable and informative website is indispensable for GP practices, offering significant advantages to both patients and healthcare providers.

Enhanced Patient Engagement

A user-friendly website serves as a vital touchpoint for patients seeking information and services. The 2024 GP Patient Survey revealed that 60.7% of patients attempted to use their GP practice website to access information or services, with 64.8% finding it easy to use.

Improved Access to Services

Online services such as appointment booking, prescription requests, and access to medical records empower patients to manage their healthcare conveniently. NHS England reports that over a quarter of the patient population is now registered to use GP online services, highlighting the growing demand for digital interaction.

Operational Efficiency

Implementing online services can alleviate administrative workloads. NHS England notes that GP online services help reduce patient phone calls and visits, allowing staff to allocate more time to direct patient care.

Patient Satisfaction

Accessible online services contribute to higher patient satisfaction. The GP Patient Survey indicates that 72.0% of patients were satisfied with the appointment they were offered, reflecting the positive impact of streamlined digital services.

Choosing the Right Solution

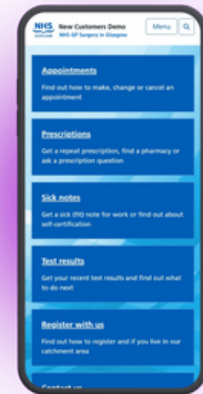
Selecting an appropriate digital platform is crucial. A well-designed website that adheres to NHS web standards and is mobile-friendly ensures accessibility for all patients, including those with disabilities. This inclusivity fosters trust and encourages patient engagement.

In summary, investing in a highly usable and informative practice website enhances patient engagement, improves access to services, boosts operational efficiency, and elevates patient satisfaction. Embracing digital solutions positions GP practices to meet the evolving needs of their patient populations effectively.

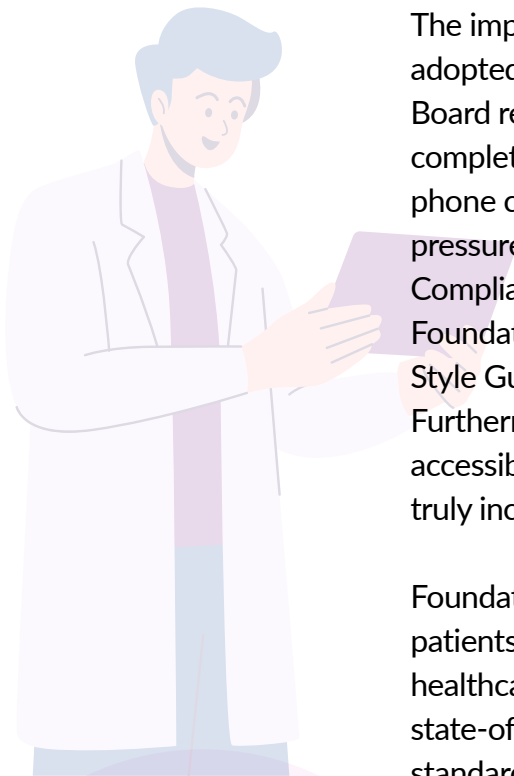
Why choose Foundation?

Foundation is revolutionising how GP practices in NHS England connect with patients and manage daily operations. In a world where digital solutions are no longer a luxury but a necessity, Foundation provides an innovative, comprehensive platform that benefits both patients and practice staff alike.

At the heart of Foundation lies its ability to empower patients. With a mobile-first design, it ensures seamless access to vital healthcare services on any device, whether on a smartphone or desktop. Patients can effortlessly book online consultations, find self-help resources, and access up-to-date practice information. According to an NHS GP Patient Survey, 62% of patients reported visiting their GP website, showcasing the critical role an intuitive and accessible digital platform plays in meeting modern patient expectations.



For GP practice staff, Foundation is a game-changer. It streamlines operations with tools that simplify website management and reduce administrative burdens. The drag-and-drop editor allows practices to make instant updates without needing technical expertise, ensuring that information is always current and accurate. Integration with NHS resources further enhances efficiency by facilitating smoother management of online consultations and patient enquiries. These features collectively free up staff time, allowing them to prioritise patient care.



The impact of Foundation is evident in practices that have already adopted the platform. For example, the Black Country Integrated Care Board reported that within a single year, 342,658 forms were completed online. This shift not only saved approximately 34,749 phone calls or physical visits to practices but also significantly reduced pressure on reception staff, particularly during peak times. Compliance and accessibility are foundational to the platform's design. Foundation adheres strictly to the NHS Design System and Content Style Guide, achieving a benchmark rating of 98% at launch. Furthermore, its compliance with WCAG 2.2 Level AA ensures accessibility for all patients, including those with disabilities, making it a truly inclusive solution.

Foundation's power lies in its ability to adapt to the needs of both patients and practices, fostering a digital environment where healthcare is accessible, efficient, and user-friendly. By integrating state-of-the-art technology with practical features, it sets a new standard for GP practice websites, enhancing both patient experiences and the working lives of practice staff.



Key Features of Foundation

Foundation conforms to NHS web guidelines

Foundation is designed to align with NHS guidelines, ensuring compliance with the NHS Content Style Guide. It helps you to achieve the highest possible rating against NHS benchmarks, supporting practices and improving patient web journeys.

WCAG 2.2 Level AA Compliant

We prioritise meeting the highest WCAG guidelines, to ensure that all patients, regardless of sight, hearing, or mobility issues, can access our digital resources conveniently and inclusively.

Specialised NHS Blocks

NHS blocks allow you to present pre-set cards of information in concise, eye-grabbing formats and easily group related topics and links together.

Mobile First Design

Designed as mobile first, but equally at home on tablets, laptops and desktops.

Integration with NHS Self-Help Information

Optimise patient care with effortless signposting through seamless integration with NHS self-help information.

Simplified Drag & Drop Editing

Instantly make changes without technical knowledge - these can be reflected across every site in the ICS, ICB, locality or PCN.

Easy to navigate Interface

Uncluttered and proven interface enables patients to complete tasks rapidly.

Foundation websites are NHS Driven

Foundation websites reflect NHS guidelines for providing online consultations and the latest healthcare advice while having the potential for so much more.

From Foundation to Transformation: Elevating Patient Care Through FootFall

By building on the standard Foundation website, practices can integrate an enhanced patient engagement and online consultation platform that improves efficiency, accessibility, and patient satisfaction. Adding the various elements of FootFall provides a comprehensive set of features, including online triage tools guiding patients to the most appropriate service, secure messaging for timely communication, and the ability to request repeat prescriptions and appointments online without having to telephone the surgery. Routine administrative tasks, such as processing test result queries, can be automated to streamline daily operations and free up valuable staff time.

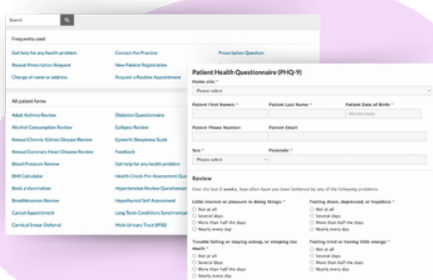
Real-life examples demonstrate the tangible benefits of this approach. At Quedgeley Medical Centre, the introduction of these online services streamlined patient requests, allowing reception teams to focus on more urgent matters. Similarly, Carolside Medical Centre saw improved patient experiences as users accessed services at their convenience, leading to reduced call volumes and shorter waiting times. Both practices reported an overall boost in patient satisfaction and operational efficiency following the introduction of these enhanced digital features.



Furthermore, NHS England has highlighted how Online Consultation and Video Consultation (OCVC) solutions help reduce unnecessary practice visits, easing pressure on waiting rooms and staff workloads. By offering remote clinical advice, patients—particularly those with limited mobility or busy schedules—benefit from a more convenient means of accessing healthcare. Early triage via these digital channels directs patients promptly to the appropriate clinician or service, reducing administrative overheads and allowing GPs to devote more time to direct patient care. As a result, expanding beyond the basic Foundation website to incorporate such digital tools not only improves patient outcomes but also supports healthcare professionals in delivering a more efficient, patient-centred service.

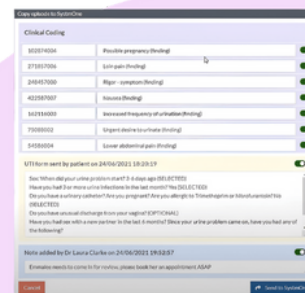
Discover FootFall Elements*

Create a holistic healthcare solution tailored to your needs with our range of specialised modules. These include simple forms that ease pressure on phone lines and front desks, tools that support smoother collaboration, and EHR integration with full SNOMED CT coding, along with much more.*



Forms

Choose from our suite of 50+ pre-built forms, many of which are SNOMED CT coded, ensuring seamless integration with clinical systems. These forms cover everything from registering patients online to recording blood pressure and health reviews, fit note requests and cancelling appointments.



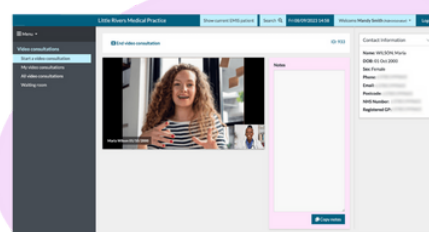
EHR Integration

Seamlessly integrate with third-party tools and online consultation systems, enabling the export of healthcare episodes directly into clinical systems with SNOMED coding. Enhance this capability with our unique desktop application, which provides direct integration between FootFall and your chosen clinical system for streamlined and efficient workflows.



Appointment Booking

Integrate patient booking into your workflow with tailored self booking links and website-embedded scheduling, giving patients simple and flexible access. Create links for specific slot types and clinicians, share them through SMS, email or your website, and rely on real time integration with EMIS Optum and TPP SystmOne for a smooth and coordinated booking process.



Video Consultation

Start video consultations directly from the dashboard, inviting patients by SMS or email using any web-enabled device, either instantly or through scheduled appointments.



Full Editing Service

Any requests for edits required will be actioned by our dedicated Support Team of Digital Support Specialists. Our Digital Support Specialists are available to advise the practice on the digital content for the site. They will offer advice about how best to organise and display content to ensure compliance with NHS standards and accessibility standards.

**Footfall Elements are additional services which incur an extra charge*

Description of Services

Foundation is a Website Patient Navigation System that has been built on years of experience in building websites for use in a primary care setting. The system has been designed to utilise interaction, content and service design as outlined by the NHS Design System and Content Style Guide. Patient and practice feedback coupled with testing results gained in a lab environment have significantly influenced the navigation and content.

- Designed as mobile first, but equally at home on tablets, laptops and desktop
- Uncluttered and proven interface enables patients to complete tasks rapidly
- Incorporates a focus on the top eight tasks identified from NHS England's research
- Integrates with third party tools and services, including other online consultation systems. Unique drag and drop design facility allows customers to change the design dynamically while still retaining NHS design standards
- Enables ICBs and PCNs to standardise and evolve the design across all practices from a single interface
- Designed to help patients navigate to the right solution for their problem or condition
- Signposts patients to local self-help groups, pharmacies, walk in centres and hospitals. The local DOS can also be integrated if required
- Including integration with the latest NHS A-Z self-help information
- Built to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 (WCAG) AA compliance standard

Foundation is provided as a “software as a service”. Instead of installing and maintaining software, it can be accessed via the internet freeing you from software and storage management. Silicon Practice manages access to the application, including security, availability, enhancements and performance.

What's included

Patient Facing Website

Foundation is a patient navigation system designed for NHS England, combining a mobile-first approach with NHS-compliant design and intuitive tools. It enhances patient access to online consultations and self-help resources while improving practice efficiency and patient engagement.

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Hosting Services

The service will be hosted in secure NHS approved hosting facility in the UK with >99.9% uptime and that is certified to the ISO 27001:2022 security standard.

Customer Support

We are available to answer your queries by telephone or email. Our customer support is available Monday to Friday 8.00am – 5.00pm (excluding Bank Holidays).

Responsive Sites

Your service automatically adjusts according to the device being used, whether it is a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop PC. The content will be re-arranged to be optimal for that device.

Training

Training on how to edit the site (via Microsoft Teams) is given to groups of staff at the practice.

Software Updates

Software updates include security patches, minor bug fixes and enhancements. Many of these updates can be performed without loss of service. However, some updates, especially security updates may cause a short downtime (less than two minutes) while the update is installed. These will usually be performed late at night when there is little usage of the system. If a critical security patch needs to be applied that may need to be done as soon as possible and there may be little notice given of these updates.

Software updates to meet all required legislation/regulation are automatically applied and monitored by our Clinical Safety Officer. Firstly, software updates are identified by the Development Manager in association with the Compliance Officer. Secondly, we produce an action plan identifying gaps in the product. Lastly, we feed these into the development plan that links to the software release process.

Software Upgrades

Software upgrades are new versions of the software. Such upgrades are always discussed with the customer and the upgrade is scheduled in advance with notices given to all users of the upgrade date and time. Once again these will be performed late at night when the usage is low. Depending on the nature of the upgrade, the practice may be given a preview of the upgrade in advance so that they can prepare for the change.

Implementation Process

Silicon Practice delivers a structured and flexible onboarding process tailored to each organisation. A typical implementation takes 4 to 6 weeks, depending on the level of customisation required, and is coordinated using a dedicated project plan with clear milestones and responsibilities. The process includes website configuration, form and workflow setup, integration with clinical systems, and user training delivered remotely via online sessions and supporting documentation. For organisations requiring rapid deployment, a reduced scope implementation can be completed in approximately 2 weeks, with full customisation transitioned at an agreed later date. This approach ensures a smooth, efficient rollout and enables teams to adopt the service confidently from day one.



Offboarding

Contract end and notice

Contracts run for the period defined in the relevant Order Form or Call Off Contract, including any optional extension periods. Termination rights and notice requirements are defined within those agreements. Where extensions are permitted, customers are asked to provide at least 4 weeks' notice prior to contract end.

Structured exit and transition

If a contract is not extended, Silicon Practice follows a structured offboarding process led by a dedicated Customer Success Manager working with nominated customer stakeholders.

The offboarding plan covers:

- Roles and responsibilities for both parties
- Communication and stakeholder engagement
- Notice period activities and milestones
- Controlled service switch off
- Post exit closure activities
- Secure data handling and transfer

Data extraction and service closure

At contract end, Silicon Practice will, at the choice of the Data Controller:

- Return all Personal Data, or
- Securely delete all Personal Data unless retention is required by UK law

Additional controls include:

- Documented data extracts available in CSV format and PDF where applicable
- User accounts disabled following service closure
- No further submissions or messaging permitted after termination

Service levels and support (SLAs)

Availability and uptime

- Service availability is 24/7/365.
- Minimum uptime commitment of 99.9 percent.

Support channels

- Email and telephone support are provided.
- Support hours are Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 17:00 UK time, excluding Bank Holidays.
- Support can be provided to approved third parties.
- Onsite support is available at additional cost.

Response and resolution

- Initial response to all support requests within one working day.
- Simple updates such as website text or news changes typically completed within one working day.
- For more complex requests, estimated timescales are confirmed within one working day.

Incident management

- Incidents are logged through the helpdesk system.
- Incidents are triaged and prioritised based on impact and severity.
- Severity levels aligned with NHS England incident management guidance.
- Critical outages escalated immediately for prioritised resolution.
- Dedicated Account Managers support coordination and communication.

Clinical safety and regulatory compliance (governance)

Governance and accountability

- Named board level responsibility for service and information security.
- Oversight aligned to the Software Security Code of Practice.
- Security governance certified against ISO/IEC 27001.

Clinical safety and data integrity

- SNOMED coded digital forms support accurate clinical record keeping.
- Episodes exported directly into clinical systems.
- Role based access controls and Multi Factor Authentication for authenticated users.
- Audit logs available in real time for user and supplier actions.
- Logs retained for at least 12 months.

Security and information governance

- Alignment with NHS England information governance requirements.
- Compliance with Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus.
- Data encrypted in transit using TLS 1.2 or above.
- Patient identifiable data encrypted at rest and in transit using AES 256.
- Hosted on AWS within UK regions and Availability Zones.

Secure development and assurance

- Peer reviewed pull request process for all code changes.
- Releases tested prior to deployment.
- Data Protection Impact Assessments for new products and major changes.
- Independent penetration testing at least annually by a CHECK provider.
- Risk based vulnerability management prioritising threats to confidentiality, integrity, availability, regulatory compliance, and clinical safety.

Business continuity and disaster recovery

Infrastructure resilience and failover

Foundation Website plus FootFall Elements is hosted on AWS using a distributed architecture across multiple Availability Zones within the UK. This removes single points of failure and enables automated failover between infrastructure components in the event of a fault.

Key continuity controls include:

- Real time data replication across multiple Availability Zones
- Encrypted storage of all data at rest and in transit using NHS compliant standards
- Continuous monitoring and alerting for service health, performance, and availability
- Automated scaling to handle spikes in demand

This architecture supports a minimum uptime commitment of 99.9 percent and ensures continuity of service even during infrastructure level incidents.

Backup and data recovery

- Secure encrypted backups
- Regular testing of backup and restoration processes
- Documented data extract capability in CSV and PDF formats
- Defined data restoration procedures prioritised by impact and risk

Incident management and service restoration

- Logging, triage, and prioritisation of incidents via the helpdesk
- Immediate escalation of critical incidents
- Regular status updates and coordinated communications
- Post incident reporting with root cause analysis for major incidents

Change and continuity management

- Zero planned downtime approach wherever possible
- Controlled releases with testing prior to deployment
- Changes scheduled to minimise operational impact

Exit and continuity at contract end

- Controlled service switch off and account deactivation
- Secure data extraction or deletion as instructed by the Data Controller
- Confirmation of closure and data handling provided

Project Management and Communication with the Practice

Project Mobilisation

We work with the Practice's Project Management team to ensure that the implementation goes as smoothly as possible. This includes working with practice manager and GPIT Leads (if appropriate).

1. At the start of the project the practice will receive from us a "next steps" email. This identifies the implementation process and what they need to do next.
2. Silicon Practice takes the information from the practice website and customises their site and then sends the practice a preview site.
3. We expect the practice to review the site in preparation for their review meeting with a Digital Support Specialist at the agreed time.
4. Silicon Practice makes the agreed amends and sends to the practice for review. We expect the practice to review the amends and give their approval to the site going "live". Silicon Practice deliver practice training.
5. The planned go live date will be the date agreed at the start of the project (unless an alternative date has been agreed in writing).

Silicon Practice will send the "go live" email to the practice. We expect the practice to forward these details to their existing website provider.

Testimonials

Customer feedback from Debbie Penney, of The Orchard Medical Centre, South Gloucestershire:

'I have worked in primary care for nearly 30 years and this is by far the best website supplier I have used.

'Firstly it was very easy to set up, the system is flexible. The team are very responsive and most importantly are compliant with all regulation and standards. With general practice becoming ever more complex, it's one area I can have confidence in and easily manage.'

Customer feedback from Sarah Buchan, of Fakenham Medical Practice, Norfolk:

'We have been delighted with the impact it has had and the feedback we have received from patients in a short time.

'Patients are getting the help they need more quickly and conveniently and, for the surgery, it has reduced the pressure on phone lines and helps ensure face to face appointments are for those who really need it.'

Customer feedback from Jennie Ford, of Leckhampton Surgery, Gloucestershire:

'I have recently joined a practice using a Silicon Practice Website – I have found them always very quick to make any changes requested and very helpful with any queries.'

Customer feedback from Lindsay Brynes, of Carolside Medical Centre, Glasgow:

'Since going live with FootFall in 2021, the pressure on the phone lines has reduced by 30% and as a result, the Reception Team now have more time to effectively triage and manage patient requests online.

'We have been actively recommending FootFall to other practices in the area.'

Customer feedback from Carla Mathurin, of Friar Gate Surgery, Derby:

'We are heavy users of this website and its functionality because it is flexible and very user friendly. The support from the Silicon Team is excellent. They have helped us move smoothly into providing digital services to our patients.'

Case study

Wootton Medical Practice - Supporting the NHS digital front door vision with Foundation

Overview

This case study from Wootton Medical Practice explores how a new Foundation GP website improved patient access, streamlined communication and supported NHS goals around digital inclusion and online access to care.

About the Practice

Wootton Medical Practice provides care for around 7,800 patients through a multidisciplinary team of clinicians, nurses and administrative staff. The practice is committed to continuous improvement and to making healthcare access simple, inclusive and efficient for its local community.

The Challenge

Before upgrading its website, the practice faced several common challenges. The existing site was difficult for patients to navigate, leading to missed information and unnecessary phone calls. Updating content was time consuming for staff, making it harder to keep information current. The platform also did not fully meet NHS accessibility and design standards, limiting its ability to support digital inclusion.

As more services moved online, the website became a critical part of the patient journey and needed to function as a true digital front door into the practice.

The Digital Solution

Silicon Practice worked closely with the team at Wootton to design a new Foundation website aligned with the practice's priorities and patient needs. The onboarding process included guidance on accessibility, content structure and the introduction of self service tools to support patients online.

The transition was carefully managed, with clear timelines, responsive support and best practice advice throughout the design and go live process. The new website launched smoothly and delivered immediate improvements in usability and performance.

Impact and Outcomes

Since launching the new website, the practice has seen improved patient access, with more people able to complete key tasks online such as finding information, accessing services and understanding how to contact the practice.

The site is fully accessible and mobile responsive, supporting patients with different needs, including those with disabilities or limited digital skills. It also aligns with NHS Design System principles, helping the practice maintain compliance and prepare for future digital initiatives.

Staff can now update the website quickly and easily, keeping content accurate without technical support, improving operational efficiency and freeing up time for patient care.

Voices from the Practice

Practice Manager Lisa Marotta highlights the professionalism of the team and the ease of keeping information up to date, noting that the website has made it much easier for patients to find what they need.