

The NHS Retirement Fellowship guide to using Zoom



Introduction

The NHS Retirement Fellowship thinks Zoom offers great opportunities such as branch meetings and committee catch ups – the staff are also using it for staff meetings.

However, we know members need guidance on how to use it practically. This guide aims to help you at a very simplistic level whether you are hosting a meeting or just attending. We will update it in response to your feedback.

The trustees are looking to hold virtual meetings on Zoom once members who are less experienced have had the opportunity to practice using the platform – a couple of trials might be something you would wish to consider for your branch before you have a full meeting.

Signing up to Zoom

To be able to use Zoom, you need to sign up by inputting your email address and downloading the app. You can go straight to Zoom by typing in “zoom.us” in the search bar and hitting return. Zoom is compatible with all types of computer including Windows, Mac and android. The layout will be slightly different depending on whether you are on desktop or mobile.

There are four plans available – **you only need to have the free tier and do not need to pay for a subscription.**

The free tier enables virtual meetings can be held with up to 100 participants, 1-on-1 meetings without a time limit are possible, and meetings with multiple participants can be held for up to 40 minutes. (When your time is up, you can simply restart a meeting if need be but we will come on to that). Many times, the meeting is just allowed to go on for an unlimited amount of time anyway.

It is possible to take part in meetings just by visiting the website but for best results and to make it easier whenever you use Zoom, download the app. Don't worry – the website will direct you how to do this the first time you visit the site so just follow the instructions.

Zoom will ask for permission to send resources including product videos and how-to guides your way. Either click "confirm" or "Set Preferences;" – this means you can opt to receive emails once a week, once a month, or never. Make your selection.

By now, a confirmation email should have landed in your inbox. Open the message, click "Activate Account" or paste the included confirmation link into your browser, and then at the next prompt, you will need to complete account creation with your name and a password.

Joining a meeting

There are two ways to join a meeting and either way works fine:

- If you have the Zoom app (which is our recommendation), then the host of your meeting will either email or text you a link to the details about a log in and password for you to input at the time of your meeting. Alternatively, they may simply text you the login and password codes for you to input manually when you open up Zoom and click into join a meeting.
- If you don't have the app, you will need to be sent a link to join up automatically.

When you log in to zoom, remember to check the audio is working on your computer and that you switch your video on (if you do forget, Zoom provides a reminder in the bottom left hand corner). You should also click on "gallery view" in the top right hand corner to make sure you can see and hear everyone on your call.

Some technicalities: - make sure you have your computer audio and video on otherwise people won't be able to see and/ or hear you. You will also need to make sure the volume on your laptop, phone or tablet is turned up sufficiently. You can alter it during the call if you find it is too loud or quiet.

The first few minutes are usually everyone making sure they have all of these things sorted so don't worry about that.

If you are using Zoom on an iPad, you will see the other people taking part in the meeting by swiping left to right.

Taking part in a meeting

For the first couple of minutes, people will just be trying to chat and get themselves sorted and the technology working. The chair of the meeting (who may not always be the host) should be able to bring a meeting to order. The best thing if you want to say something is to just raise your hand – otherwise it can get too confusing with everyone talking at once. If you have children or animals or other people in the background noise, you may choose to put yourself on mute (hover over the dots next to your name in your screen and it will pop up). This means you can hear and see everything but they can't hear you – so remember to unmute yourself if you want to speak.

Leaving a meeting

You may need to leave a meeting before it finishes. Just tell everyone you have to go and press "leave meeting" in red on the bottom right hand corner. Alternatively, the host will end the meeting. After you have come out of the meeting, close down Zoom by pressing the cross in the top left hand corner.

Hosting a meeting

To host a meeting, I've found the easiest way is to go to scheduling and follow the instructions to input your details for what time and when you want to have your meeting. You then need to email or text your group with the details of when the meeting is to take place. You must send the log on and the password – if you click on “same details” then it is easier to just send the same information out and some people will save it.

As host, you can mute everyone if that makes it easier for the chair to follow what is going on but remember to unmute them when they want to speak!

To close the meeting just click on “end meeting for all”.

Other features

There are a number of other features on Zoom such as screen sharing, chat messaging, background changes and emojis. Further guidance on these can be shared if required.

We hope this guide helps – give us a shout if there is something missing or you continue to have problems.

Lucia Hiden, Head of Communications, May 2020