

GP Home Visit Policy

Due to increasing demand on primary care services and an ongoing national shortage of GP we have had to outline a home visiting policy.

Home Visits by GPs are reserved for the following groups of patients:

- Terminally ill;
- Bedbound;
- Patients who are severely ill and cannot be mobilised.

Please remember that several patients can be seen in the practice in the time that it takes to make one home visit. So please help us to help you and our other patients by visiting the surgery whenever possible.

We want to see patients as quickly as possible, and the best way is often to encourage them to come to the surgery, because your GP will have access to all your medical records, including those held on computer. There are also better facilities for examining and treating patients at the surgery.

Babies and small children should always be brought to the surgery where we will do our best to see them promptly. If the Reception staff are made aware that your child is particularly unwell, they will do everything they can to see that you are not kept waiting unnecessarily to see the doctor.

Transport/social problems – We cannot undertake home visits for reasons of convenience, lack of transport, or because simply a patient is a resident in a residential care home, sheltered accommodation or nursing home. We will be happy to provide you with details of local taxi firms and volunteer car services. From experience, we are aware that relatives, neighbours or friends are often willing to help out. Our responsibility to you is to resolve the medical problem you have; your responsibility is to take all the reasonable steps you are able to, to enable us to do that.

Please request visits before 10am whenever possible as this allows the Doctor to plan their day accordingly. Late requests often lead to disruption of the appointment system and excessive waiting times for others.

A doctor/nurse will call you back prior to any visit to assess your problem. This is to enable the healthcare professional to prioritise visits.

It may be that your problem can be dealt with by telephone advice, or that it would be more appropriate to send a nurse, or indeed arrange a hospital attendance. It also prepares the doctor to collect some information required as necessary for the visit.

He/she will ask you to come to the surgery, if you do not fit one of the categories above, where you will be seen as soon as possible.

The doctors would like to stress that NO patient in definite need of a home visit will be refused.

In the past, GPs were able to do routine follow up home visits. Sadly, pressures of time and more patients needing attention means this is no longer possible.