



# *Longfield Medical Centre*

## **HOME VISITING POLICY**

### **Requesting a Home Visit**

Requests for visits must be made before 10:00am. Visiting will normally take place after morning surgery. Please only request home visits if you are incapable of attending the surgery. Whenever possible, try and come into the surgery as facilities here are far better for examination and treatment. It helps us to judge the urgency of the call if you describe the symptoms. The receptionists are trained to deal with your calls so do expect to be asked. All information is confidential. The doctor may telephone prior to, or instead of, visiting. Visits requested later in the day that are for the housebound, but are not urgent, will not be seen that day. Ring early if you wish for a routine call if you are housebound.

### **Children**

Sick children will always be seen as soon as possible if brought into the surgery; it is not appropriate to wait for a visit. We rarely visit children at home as a responsible adult should be available to bring them to surgery.

### **Our home visiting policy**

Our home visiting policy is based on the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) guidelines.

You cannot insist that a GP visits you at home.

A GP will only visit you at home if they think that your medical condition requires it. A GP can also decide how urgently a visit is needed.

Due to increasing demand, GPs can no longer automatically visit any patient who requests a home visit. All visits must now be triaged and dealt with according to clinical need.

GPs are better able to assess patients in the surgery where they have access to specialist equipment, good lighting and examination facilities and therefore it is always the preferable site for any consultation.

GPs having to visit inappropriate house call patients are delayed from visiting those patients who are in genuine need of a visit and therefore this poses an unacceptable clinical risk.

GPs are not responsible for ensuring that a patient has financial means to attend the surgery nor that the patient chooses to register with a practice that is difficult for them to get to in bad weather or without a car.

The status of a patient living in a care home is no different to any other patient living at their own home. The requirement to visit a patient exists only when there is a reasonable clinical reason for the visit and a reason, on clinical grounds, why the patient cannot attend the surgery.

GPs are not obliged to visit a patient if they have assessed the patient's clinical need on the telephone and found them to be suitable for an alternative method of healthcare.

As long as the GP has made this assessment and offered an appropriate alternative (which may be an appointment the same day, a future day, telephone advice or attendance at other healthcare site such as A&E) then the partners of Longfield Medical Centre will support any such decision made by a doctor working at the practice.