

AVOIDING UNPLANNED HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS AND A&E ATTENDANCES

Guidance on the use of GP Practice Bypass Numbers for A&E clinicians and ambulance staff

Introduction

The new Unplanned Admissions Service is a voluntary scheme for GP practices and has been introduced to help reduce the number of unplanned hospital admissions and A&E attendances.

As one part of the scheme, GP practices nationally have been asked to provide timely telephone access, via ex-directory or 'bypass number', to relevant clinicians and providers to support decisions relating to hospital transfers or admissions, in order to reduce avoidable hospital admissions or A&E attendances.

How does this affect our service?

These telephone numbers (bypass numbers) are being issued to local ambulance staff and A&E clinicians. Calls received in via the bypass numbers should be treated as a priority call by GP practices.

If you are a clinician and specifically ask to speak to a clinician in the GP practice about a hospital admissions, transfer or A&E attendance, then the practice should enable you to do so whenever practically possible; this should be done within a suitable timeframe (recognising that the query being raised relates to whether or not to transfer or admit a patient to hospital) i.e. it may be immediate, within an hour or on the same day.

What are the bypass numbers not to be used for?

These numbers are specifically set aside for priority calls; it is therefore the expectation of NHS England and the GP practices that these will not be used for normal or routine calls to the practice to help ensure the telephone line is open whenever possible. The only exception to this is if you have a prior agreement with the practice to use the bypass number under different circumstance.

How many practices have a bypass number?

Over 95% of practices within the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire are participating in the voluntary scheme and have a bypass number operational.

When are the numbers in use?

The telephone numbers are available now and should be answered between 8am – 6.30pm Monday to Friday subject to the practices opening hours.

Where can I obtain the bypass numbers for?

A copy of the bypass numbers local to your service is included with this information sheet. If you would like any additional practices within the Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire area or would like refreshed information, please email:

- Nottinghamshire: e.derbyshiren Nottinghamshire-gpnotts@nhs.net
- Derbyshire : e.derbyshiren Nottinghamshire-gpderbys@nhs.net