

Heaton Mersey Medical Practice

Home Visit Information for Patients

Policy and Criteria for Home Visits

- Home visits are reserved for patients who are genuinely housebound and who do not leave the house for any reason, including those in residential and nursing homes.
- We will visit only if the patient's clinical condition prevents them from travelling to the surgery and they are deemed to have a medical condition that necessitates an urgent medical opinion.
- Age is not a criterion for a home visit, the criteria applies to both older and younger people.
- Home visits will not be undertaken for social / transport reasons.
- The clinician may decline to visit the patient and offer an urgent appointment at the surgery if he/she feels that is more appropriate.

A GP is likely to visit for these conditions:

- Patients with a terminal illness
- The truly bed-bound patient, for whom travel to the surgery by car would cause deterioration to their medical condition or unacceptable discomfort.

A GP MAY visit for these conditions:

- Those who are not usually bed-bound but have a clinical condition that prevents them from being ambulatory (able to walk from one room to the next).

A GP will NOT usually visit for these conditions and circumstances:

- Common symptoms of childhood fevers, cold, cough, earache, headache, diarrhoea /vomiting and most cases of abdominal pain. These patients are usually well enough to travel by car. It is not harmful to take a child with a fever outside. These children may not be fit to travel by bus or walk, but car transport is available from friends, relatives or taxi firms.
- Adults with common problems, such as a cough, sore throat, influenza, back pain and abdominal pain, are also readily transportable by car to the surgery premises.
- Common problems in the elderly, such as poor mobility, joint pain and general malaise, would also best be treated by consultation at the surgery premises where the facilities are available for full examination and investigations. The exception to this would be the truly bed-bound patient.

Please note the following:

- Wherever possible patients requiring a consultation with a GP will be asked to attend the surgery.
- The practice is not responsible for arranging transport to the surgery.
- We will not visit for convenience.
- In the surgery the GP undertaking the consultation has the correct facilities, access to the full clinical record and access to support services such as Practice Nurses and therefore a consultation at the practice is better quality with regard to governance issues.
- Home visits are not an efficient or effective use of pressurised GP time.
- If you request a home visit, you may initially receive a telephone consultation from the Doctor or Advanced Nurse Practitioner, who will discuss your symptoms with you. You may be asked to attend the surgery as a result of this consultation if clinically appropriate.

Please dial 999 in case of a genuine life threatening emergency. For life-threatening emergencies, requesting a visit from a GP can delay life-saving treatment. Patients are therefore advised to ring the emergency services directly when experiencing the following:

- Chest pain
- Severe shortness of breath
- Severe bleeding
- Suspected stroke