

Home Visit Policy

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Title	Home Visit	
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Background

This document explains the manner in which Hope Citadel Healthcare will handle requests for Home Visits from patients that wish to have their consultations at home.

All reception and clinical staff will be provided with training at induction so that they fully understand this policy.

Home Visits are discretionary and not an absolute requirement of GP terms and services. Lack of transport is not in itself an indication for a home visit. Home visits are a poor use of GP time, meaning less time for other patients. Visits are extremely time consuming for healthcare professionals, as only 2-3 patients can be seen per hour in a home setting (with fewer assessment and treatment options), compared with 6 or more at the surgery. While we will not decline visits to patients who are genuinely too ill to travel by themselves it would be best to keep these to a minimum to make best use of clinical time. It is difficult to provide high quality modern health care outside the surgery. By attending surgery patients can access timely and appropriate investigations. At the surgery, doctors have equipment to make thorough assessments for patients, we have ECG machines, nebulisers, pulse oximeter, nurses can do blood tests and dressings as required. A Doctor does not carry these with him/her. Consultations outside of the surgery carry a higher risk of medical errors.

Handling requests

Requests for home visits should reach the surgery by 10.30am to allow the practice to schedule in the visit around the doctor's clinical day.

The practice will often firstly ask the GP to call the patient to triage the situation and therefore the visit will be at that GPs discretion, rather than the receptionist.

Criteria

There are specific circumstances where GP home visits are clinically appropriate and offer the best way to provide a medical opinion. These include:

- i) Patients who are terminally ill
- ii) Patients who are genuinely bedbound, where travelling to the surgery by car would result in a deterioration of their medical condition or cause unacceptable discomfort.
- iii) Patients must reside within a 10-minute travel distance from the practice. Those living further away will be required to register with a GP practice closer to their home to ensure timely and effective care.
- iv) Any other situations at the doctor's discretion.

Situations which would not normally require a home visit include common symptoms of illnesses in children, adults, or the elderly such as fevers, colds, coughs, diarrhoea/vomiting etc. These patients should either travel into the surgery by car (and sit in isolation at the practice if deemed necessary) or the doctor should be able to provide advice over the phone.