# GEORGE CLARE SURGERY

# Home Visit Policy

## Document Control

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### B. Document Details

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The purpose of this policy is to give guidance to both patients and staff when home visits are requested. The George Clare Surgery aims to provide a safe environment for clinicians whilst taking in to consideration the rising demands and our intention to maintain safe and high quality care for all patients registered with the practice.

Patients who are too ill or physically incapable of travelling to the surgery may request a home visit. A decision as to whether or not a home visit is necessary is at the medical judgement, and discretion of the General Practitioner/Clinical Nurse Practitioner. George Clare Surgery has no obligation to provide a home visit service, especially to patients who do not meet the visit criteria but will by no means refuse or delay treatment of the patient

Visits requests are sometimes referred to more appropriate services such as 999 emergency response services, the JET Team, or the District Nursing team based on the reasonable opinion of the General Practitioner/Clinical Nurse Practitioner using the details provided during the triaging process.

**Home visits are reserved for the following groups of patients:**

* Terminally ill
* Bed bound
* Patients who are severely ill, and are confined to the house

**Home visits for Children**

* Children should be brought to the surgery by their parent or guardian unless they meet the criteria above, or it is at the medical judgement of the GP that they should be seen at home.

**Home visits for patients registered that live in nursing and residential homes**

* Weekly visits are made to the local residential homes Swan House, and The Gables by named General Practitioners. Additional requests for visits to these locations can be made but must follow the triage process stated below.

It is not the George Clare Surgery’s responsibility to provide transportation for patients to come to the surgery, if the patient does not meet the home visit criteria above they are deemed readily transportable by car, either by a friend, a relative or a local taxi firm.

Childcare issues for a patient is not a reason to request a home visit, patients are welcome to bring their children along to their appointments. If a sensitive examination is required for a patient with children the George Clare Surgery will try and accommodate this by providing a member of staff to mind the children whilst the examination takes place.

Using clinician time to visit patients that are not housebound can delay treatment to patients who are genuinely in need of a home visit. Whilst George Clare Surgery does not refuse to visit patients who are genuinely unable to get to the surgery themselves, it does ask patients to consider the reasons why being seen away from the surgery could be detrimental towards their own or others care.

* Clinician time taken travelling to and from patient’s home.
* Lone working risk for General Practitioners.
* Increased risk of cross infection for both the patient and the clinician.
* Lack of equipment available for assessment and treatment.
* Delay in the speed of treatment, assessments, tests, and investigations.

**Home visit triage process**

Triaging patients is a necessary process to enable the General Practitioners/Clinical Nurse Practitioner to assess the urgency and necessity of a home visit request. In order to make best use of clinician time, all visit requests should be logged with a member of the reception team by 10.30am, requests made after this time that are not deemed as urgent will be deferred to the next working day.

Initially all requests are taken by the receptionist, it is important that all information regarding the reason behind the request is obtained, this should include:

* Patient’s name
* Patients Date of Birth
* Confirmation of patient’s current address
* Confirmation of patients contact telephone numbers
* The caller’s details and their relationship to the patient (if necessary)
* The nature of the problem including any symptoms and the length of time they have been experienced.
* The severity of the visit request based on the patient opinion.
* Any Key code/ entry restrictions at the property
* Are there any lose animals at the property, and if so these should be restrained in anticipation of a visit.

Patients should be advised that they will be triaged by the “On Call” General Practitioner/Clinical Nurse Practitioner before a visit is granted.