Q1 Do you agree with Ofcom’s view that the proposed non-emergency healthcare service represents a justified use of a three-digit number? Please give reasons for your views.

Yes, too much use is made of emergency 'cover' by less critical users and this falls between 999 and the NHS Direct Service.

Q2 Do you agree with the DHs view that:

A) a three-digit number is the best choice for the proposed service and
B) of the three-digit numbers available, 111 is the best option?

Please give reasons for your views.

A) Yes - confused/older persons would not need the added complexity of dialling a long complicated number and would even worry about cost.

B) Yes - it is simple, persons needing to call would find this an easy number to dial.

Q3 What are your views on the tariff options selected by the DH?

If you want to promote the use of this service, charging seems inequitable. If this is to replace 999 calls made and saving achieved then a zero cost of call seems right. Equally, if this is to also reduce the costs and difficulty in dialling NHS Direct, then again there is no reason to charge.

However, I think there is the possibility that increased use may take the service beyond current budget. In the event a 08 number is used, perhaps there can be a guarantee that excess earnings are deployed or the charges reduced in subsequent years.

There has to be parity across telephone service providers even if a charge is agreed, albeit wrong for the reasons above.

Q4 Do you have any comments on the proposed notification of modification to the Numbering Condition in Annex 8 of this document?

No comment