

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. :

This service may have a value but it will have to be marketed clearly and with examples of when its appropriate to use it to prevent confusion with other services such as 999, NHS Direct, contact with your own out of hours GP or walk in centres and presenting at an A&E department, especially where some conditions, in their early presentation, appear non urgent can, in fact be life threatening.

We share the view of the RCOG and believe that this is only of value, if what is being proposed, really does simplify things for patients, rather than adding to the confusion as to which part of the NHS the patient should be contacting for care -

We would certainly not want to see a situation where patients are so confused that genuine life-threatening emergencies are missed.

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. :

We have concerns that 111 is a number which can be easily dialled by a child without any intended malice when accessing a handset or could be easily and accidentally activated on a mobile phone keypad.

An easily remembered 4 digit alternative containing at least two different numerals might avoid this for example 1212

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

This should be marketed as a free service as is 999

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

No