

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. :

I think that a three digit number would be an enormous help. Particularly if it will in the long term give access to NHS direct as well. In a situation where there is an urgent need for medical advice, a number which is easy to remember is much better than trying to find numbers for NHS direct, out of hours doctors etc.

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. :

Three digits mean less likelihood of misdialling, and is easy to remember. It is far enough away from 999 so that the two will not be confused. 111 is both easy to find and easy to remember.

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

I think that strenuous efforts should be made to both standardise charges and see that these are fair and equitable for patients. Having outside agencies make profits from sick people is not my idea of a good service and relying on the goodwill of service providers is simply not good enough.

Tenders must be based on providing both an efficient and affordable service for patients, with backups to ensure that lives are not put at risk. This is a very real concern when any kind of health service is profit making. The DH has a responsibility to all patients to make sure that no one is disadvantaged simply because of their post code.

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