

**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. Emergency services are overwhelmed with non-emergency calls. People expect to be able to access information and assistance 24/7 but GP services are increasingly impersonal and unavailable outside normal working hours. In urgent situations people want a quick solution and don't always think through options/want to search for numbers and information. A memorable, simple to use number is likely to be used, and 999 is the current default option.

**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, a 3 digit number is usable by everyone. It feels important, urgent, professional and official. Whereas regular telephone numbers/web addresses are harder to recall and may not feel so appropriate for people who have an urgent need for help. Being treated as 'urgent' can help people think twice about whether they have an 'emergency' on their hands, and therefore should cut inappropriate 999 calls.

B) Yes, it's very easy to remember and mirrors 999 well - the numerical gap also clearly indicates a qualitative difference in need, without suggesting the problem is unimportant.

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

The range of tariff options is rather large and, though a member of the public, not a telecoms expert, I suspect each would have an impact on the success or otherwise of the service. I believe that a free tariff should be negotiated, or there is a huge risk that the number will not be used. I don't fully understand why Ofcom has not conducted an impact study on the tariffs - surely if this service is launched with an inappropriate tariff and is not used as intended it will be very difficult to establish/re-establish with the public?

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