

HILARY COTTAGE SURGERY - Our new Triage system explained.

- Why the need for change/ what is triage?
 - When will the receptionist use this system?
 - What if I just need a routine appointment or advice and don't need to be seen?
 - When is it best to contact the surgery?
 - Medical Emergencies.
 - Your feedback
-

Why the need for change /What is triage?

The number of patients requesting same-day appointments under the old system was rapidly increasing with demand extremely difficult to predict and the doctors were not able to keep pace. Triage is the system of managing patients according to their illness or injury so they can be steered to the most appropriate source of help. This allows the Doctors to give **priority** to those **most in need**. This new system has enabled us to offer an increased number of routine appointments for patients as a result, as well as maintaining our commitment to see emergencies and urgent cases on the same day.

When will the receptionist use this system?

If you feel you need an **urgent, same day appointment** to see a doctor, the receptionist will arrange for the Duty Doctor to call you back to discuss how best to help you. The Doctor will arrange appropriate advice, an appointment with a Doctor or a Nurse, or sometimes a home visit based on the seriousness of your problem. **It will not be used for routine appointment requests.** The receptionists have been instructed to obtain basic details from you about the nature of the problem. Patient confidentiality will not be compromised. The Doctor will aim to call you back within the following hour so please ensure you are contactable by keeping your phone free. If you telephone during the lunch period, the Doctor will phone you back at the start of the afternoon surgery unless it is a medical emergency - this is unchanged from the old system. If the Doctor deems that your condition is not medically urgent for the same day, then they will book an appropriate appointment slot for you within the following week.

If your condition changes / deteriorates whilst waiting for the Duty Doctor to return your call, please let the surgery know immediately.

What if I just need a routine appointment or advice and don't need to be seen?

The system for routine appointment bookings has **not** changed and you can book an appointment up to four weeks in advance. If you need advice, the receptionist can add your name to a list for the doctor to call you back at a time when they are free. This is sometimes called a telephone consultation. **These consultations are routinely offered and are run separately from the triage call back system.** The Doctors aim to call you back at the end of their normal morning surgeries, and before their afternoon surgeries start, or early evening before the late evening surgeries on a Monday and Wednesday evening.

When is it best to contact the surgery?

Monday - Friday from 8.00am to 6.30pm. The Surgery telephone is manned Monday to Friday 8.30am - 1.30pm and 2.00pm - 6.00pm. Outside these times, your call will be transferred to the medical answering service who can contact the Duty Doctor.

Medical Emergencies

Medically urgent cases will **always** be seen on the same day and you will be given an urgent appointment, specifically for that problem.

Your feedback

We are hoping that this new system will improve urgent access to the GP and we welcome your feedback to enable us to continue to improve our service to you.