



Always **phone first**
if you need the
GP Out of Hours
Tel: 028 3839 9201

The **GP Out of Hours** service should only be used for **urgent** medical problems that **cannot wait** until your own GP practice re-opens.

The GP Out of Hours is for patients with **URGENT** or **SERIOUS MEDICAL** needs that cannot wait until their own GP surgery opens. Last year:

- the service received **100,763** contacts
- **50,122** of these were dealt with by telephone advice
- **44,015** required a base appointment
- **6,626** needed a home visit.

Patients with the most URGENT or SERIOUS conditions are prioritised. As many as 50% of calls to the Service are inappropriate e.g. blisters, cold sores and other minor ailments. This is a misuse of the OOH and as staff must treat all patients, it increases waiting times as our Medical Director Dr John Simpson explained on [BBC Good Morning Ulster](#).

New Video Guide

We have launched a new infomercial to remind people how to use the GP Out of Hours service as Clinical Lead Dr Alan Evans explains: "People who contact the GP Out of Hours are understandably anxious about their own health or that of a family member. But we receive many calls about non urgent conditions which adds pressure to the service and means those with real urgent needs are inconvenienced. Also, a number of people still drop in to a base without an appointment; those that are non urgent can face long delays.

"We want to treat all patients as safely and quickly as possible so hope this video explains how the service works, helping to ensure that the most urgent cases are given priority and everyone receives the right treatment for their needs."

View [here](#)



How the Service Works

- You can contact us from 6pm to 8am Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and on Bank Holidays.
- Always phone first on **028 3839 9201**.
- A call handler takes the patient's details and codes the call (Emergency/Urgent/Routine).
- The call transfers to a computerised list which Clinicians (GPs, Nurses and Pharmacists) prioritise.
- The Clinician phones the patient back to carry out a clinical assessment, leading to one of the following options:
 - **Telephone advice** and discharge from the service (e.g. for headaches or tummy bugs)
 - Being given a **prescription**
 - An **appointment** at a GPOOH centre
 - Arranging a **home visit**
 - **Referral** to hospital or to another agency for follow up

Bases and Opening Times

The GP Out of Hours runs across three main bases at Craigavon Area, Daisy Hill and South Tyrone hospitals with two part time centres at Tower Hill, Armagh and Kilkeel Primary Care Centre.

To ensure that the small clinical team can provide services to the total population of 360,000 people it is sometimes necessary to concentrate GP resources on the three more central sites - Craigavon, Dungannon and Newry. This will affect those patients who need to attend a centre for a face to face appointment - telephone advice and home visits will remain available.

Main GP OOH bases	Appointments can only be arranged during the listed opening hours
Craigavon Area Hospital Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry South Tyrone Hospital, Dungannon	Monday to Friday: 6.00pm to 8.00am Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: All day
Part time bases	Appointments can only be arranged during the listed opening hours
Armagh Community Hospital Kilkeel Primary Care Centre	Monday to Friday: 7.00pm -11.00pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: 9.00am -11.00pm Monday to Friday: 8.00pm – 11.00pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: 11.00am – 2.00pm and 8.00pm -11.00pm
<p><i>If an appointment is needed outside of the times listed for Armagh and Kilkeel it will be offered at one of the main bases.</i></p>	

Feeling unwell?

Make sure you Choose well

There are a range of healthcare services available to help you find the right care. Choose the right option and you may be feeling better quicker.

To find out more, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/choosewell



Think Where



For more information on how and when to contact GP out of hours and what to do in an emergency www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net www.nidirect.gov.uk/choosewell

Click here for our handy [‘GP Out of Hours Fact or Fiction’](#) guide to the service.

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