



## Out-of-hours treatment for patients with palliative care needs



Out-of-hours palliative GP service  
**0845 504 9113**

[Local rate - mobile costs may vary according to service provider]



Devon Doctors recognises that patients with palliative care needs and their carers can be reluctant to seek help during the night or at weekends. This leaflet aims to reassure you that we are available throughout the entire out-of-hours period. There will always be a doctor available for you to speak to. Please call us if you think we may be able to help.

### **Who to call**

Devon Doctors provides the urgent out-of-hours GP service in Devon. We offer urgent GP and nursing care when your surgery is closed. You can contact us out-of-hours by telephoning 0845 504 9113.

### **Information we need**

We require some brief personal information when you call. Devon Doctors utilises an electronic information system that records individual treatment plans, decisions and wishes. This information is shared with key healthcare professionals including the ambulance service, hospitals and community healthcare teams. Please be prepared to give our call operator the patient's:

- Name ■ Date of birth ■ Address and telephone
- GP and surgery name ■ Current symptoms



## What happens when you call us

A call operator takes the patient's details. These are sent by computer to a duty doctor

We can contact your local district nurse if requested

The duty doctor may have a special note provided by your own GP or palliative care nurse explaining your treatment and wishes

The duty doctor will aim to telephone you within 20 minutes and assess the problem  
They can provide the following:

Advice over the phone

Home visit within one hour  
(The doctor can also arrange for a district nurse to visit you)

Prescription for medicine or dose adjustment to help control your symptoms

Details of the above are sent to your own GP the next working day.



### **Giving you priority**

We will give your call urgent priority. The duty doctor will aim to telephone you within 20 minutes.

If a home visit is needed, the visiting doctor will aim to be with you within one hour of the telephone consultation.

### **When should I call?**

Please do not hesitate to call us if there is:

- Increased pain that does not settle within two doses of prescribed medication.
- Nausea, vomiting or other symptoms that do not settle with the usual medication.

You should also call us if you have been advised to contact a doctor by a hospice nurse.

**Contact us as often as you need to.**

**Our doctors work from hospital-based treatment centres and are always ready to help you.**



### **Can we do more to help?**

Devon Doctors works closely with palliative care health professionals and hospices around Devon. With their help we review and make changes to improve our service for palliative care patients, their families and carers.

We are grateful for any feedback you may have about our service. You can:

- Ask your palliative care nurse to pass on any comments to us.
- Give your feedback via our website:  
[www.devondoctors.co.uk](http://www.devondoctors.co.uk)
- Telephone our governance team:  
01392 822 340
- Email us:  
[ddocs.patientfeedback@nhs.net](mailto:ddocs.patientfeedback@nhs.net)

### **A bit about us**

We are owned by all of the GP practices in Devon and have been providing an out-of-hours service since 1996. We are run as a social enterprise. Any profit is put back into our services to benefit patients.

You can find out more about Devon Doctors by visiting our website: [www.devondoctors.co.uk](http://www.devondoctors.co.uk)



[www.devondoctors.co.uk](http://www.devondoctors.co.uk)  
[www.localcare.mapofmedicine.com](http://www.localcare.mapofmedicine.com)



We are a social enterprise organisation  
and are owned by all of the GP practices in Devon.



Email [ddocs.patientfeedback@nhs.net](mailto:ddocs.patientfeedback@nhs.net) or call 01392 822340  
to get this information in another language or format

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