



# Cleveland Local Medical Committee

Chairman: Dr D Donovan  
Vice Chairman: Dr J-A Birch  
Secretary: Dr J T Canning  
Development Manager: Ms J Foster  
Office Manager: Ms C A Knifton

Second Floor  
320 Linthorpe Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS1 3QY

Office email: [christine.knifton@middlesbroughpct.nhs.uk](mailto:christine.knifton@middlesbroughpct.nhs.uk)

Tel: 01642 737744

LETTERS/2008/FEB/HOME VISITS

7 February 2008

**To: All nursing and residential homes in the Teesside area**

Dear Officer in Charge

## Home Visits by General Practitioners (GPs)

The arrangements under which General Practitioners (GPs) provide services to their patients were changed on 1 April 2004. These reflected a variety of changes required to update the GP service to provide a high quality service which is flexible and responsive to patients needs in a modernised NHS.

One of the areas which creates inefficiency in GP services is home visits and the regulations governing home visits have now been clarified in line with modern practice. In essence, home visits are only provided where there is definite medical need, i.e. the terminally ill, and truly bed bound.

Cleveland Local Medical Committee, which represents all general medical practitioners in contract with Primary Care Trusts in Hartlepool, North Tees, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, has drawn up guidelines to assist GPs in assessing whether or not a visit should be undertaken (copy attached), however, the most important section (on Page 2) reads as follows :

### ***Visits to nursing and residential homes***

*The status of a GPs patient living in a registered home, either nursing or residential, is no different to any other patient living at their own home. The requirement to visit a patient exists only when there is a reasonable medical reason for the visit and a reason, on medical grounds, why the patient cannot attend the surgery.*

*Registered homes often give many reasons for patients not being able to attend the practice premises. Many of a registered home's residents travel outside the home for social activities and, unless prevented from doing so by the condition requiring attention, these residents should be expected to attend surgery premises. The absence of staff to provide escorts, or lack of transport is not relevant and the judgement that a GP must make is whether or not the patient is fit to attend.*

I hope that this information is of assistance to you in arranging adequate staffing levels to enable appropriate services to be provided, and if you have any queries I will be happy to discuss the matter with you.

Yours sincerely

Dr J T Canning  
Secretary

Attachment:

Copied to: Mr Trevor Shaw : Business Relationship Manager, Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Mrs Linda Robinson : Business Relationship Manager, Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Ms Susan MacKreth : Business Relationship Manager, Commission for Social Care Inspection

Cleveland LMC is the representative body for all NHS GPs on Teesside