

SCHEDULE 1

Amendments to the GMS Contracts Regulations

Contact with the practice

10. For paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 substitute—

“Contact with the practice

4.—(1) The contractor must take steps to ensure that a patient who contacts the contractor—

- (a) by attendance at the contractor’s practice premises;
- (b) by telephone;
- (c) through the practice’s online consultation tool within the meaning given in regulation 71ZD(2); or
- (d) through a relevant electronic communication method within the meaning given in regulation 71ZE(3),

is provided with an appropriate response in accordance with the following sub-paragraphs.

(2) The appropriate response is that the contractor must—

- (a) invite the patient for an appointment, either to attend the contractor’s practice premises or to participate in a telephone or video consultation, at a time which is appropriate and reasonable having regard to all the circumstances, and the patient’s health would not thereby be jeopardised;
- (b) provide appropriate advice or care to the patient by another method;
- (c) invite the patient to make use of, or direct the patient towards, appropriate services which are available to the patient, including services which the patient may access themselves; or
- (d) communicate with the patient—
 - (i) to request further information; or
 - (ii) as to when and how the patient will receive further information on the services that may be provided to them, having regard to the urgency of their clinical needs and other relevant circumstances.

(3) The appropriate response must be provided—

- (a) if the contact under sub-paragraph (1) is made outside core hours, during the following core hours;
- (b) in any other case, during the day on which the core hours fall.

(4) The appropriate response must take into account—

- (a) the needs of the patient; and
- (b) where appropriate, the preferences of the patient.”