



# Triage

## What is triage?

It is the process of determining the medical urgency and appropriate type of healthcare required. This enables us to give care to those with the greatest health needs first – allowing us to make the most effective use of all skills and resources available to us.

Formal triage is new to our practice, but you may have encountered triage systems in other settings without realising – ie A&E departments, contacting the Out of Hours Service or Ambulance Control.

## Where are we using triage?

Patients requesting same day appointments, or attending the emergency clinic will undergo triage assessment

## The benefits

- Patient access is improved and is more efficient.
- It allows clinicians to begin a process of education on how patients may self manage in a future similar event.
- Patients who have limited time to attend the surgery may be able to be dealt with over the telephone, meaning they don't sit for a significant period of time in a waiting room where there are many sick people waiting.
- Guidance from a clinician trained in triage management helps decide the best course of action for the individual patient.
- Unnecessary journeys are not undertaken – helping the environment.

## Please remember

The aim of triage is not to put a barrier up and stop patients seeing a GP, but to improve patient service, in particular where the needs of the patient may be best served by another healthcare professional. In other words, helping us to help you.

## Why has this suddenly been brought into effect?

Please see the article on display written by Dr Howard regarding the resources available in the NHS.

## And so to recap ....

- Haygarth Doctors have begun to triage those patients who request a same day appointment in order to prioritise cases in order of clinical need.
- Sometimes discussing symptoms on the telephone with a clinician may result in a more appropriate course of action for the patient rather than having to sit for a significant period of time in the waiting room.
- It may be that your symptoms may be more appropriately dealt with by a different practitioner prior to being seen by a doctor or nurse.
- Be prepared that depending on the information you give the reception staff who are the first point of call, and then the triage clinician, you may be redirected towards a more appropriate practitioner or service

## *Of note to remember however ...*

- Chest pain - requires you to phone 999 without delay.
- Toothache - requires a dentist opinion – dentists also provide an emergency service