**At the time the appointment is made, you will be informed to:**

* Have the phone you have asked the GP or Nurse to call you on accessible, that is:
	+ Switched on and charged if it is a mobile
	+ Easy to get to and answer when it rings
* Only call the surgery *if* something changes, for example, you want to cancel the call, or you need us to call you on a different number (**please do not** call to keep checking when the GP or Nurse is going to phone you)
* That if it is
	+ A morning call then it can happen any time before 1:00 pm
	+ An afternoon call then it can happen any time before 6:30 pm

**When the GP or Nurse calls you and it is not answered**

* They will try **one more time** ‘immediately’ (that is, within a minute or so), just in case you were on your way to the phone but didn’t manage to answer it quickly enough
* If you do not answer on this second attempt, the GP or Nurse will document that they have tried twice to call you

**Admin staff have been instructed…**

* **NOT** to place you back on the screen of the GP or Nurse with a message such as “*patient missed call, asking if you can call back*” or “*patient now ready for your call*”
* To inform you that the GP or Nurse has tried to make contact twice unsuccessfully, and that a new appointment will need to be made (not necessarily for the same day: you may be advised to call back the next day to see if there are any appointments)
* To code the two unsuccessful attempts to contact you in your patient record

**Why are we doing this?**

We are not trying to make it more difficult for patients to speak to a GP or Nurse. COVID-19 has brought home something very obvious to the practice: we are doing more work via the telephone than before COVID-19, that we are *very* busy and more people are now wanting to speak to a GP or Nurse via telephone.

A GP or Nurse with a full clinic can easily have to deal with up to 40 patient contacts in the session; so to be fair to other patients, the GP or Nurse **MUST** keep moving forwards through their session list and deal with the other patients waiting. GPs and Nurses have not got the time to keep going back up their list and phoning people repeatedly until they get to speak to someone.

We cannot give a specific time slot; that is why we say either before 1:00 pm or 6:30 pm, depending on whether the GP or Nurse is to call you in the morning or afternoon.

If you wish to discuss this protocol, contact the Business Manager or the Assistant Manager.