# Protocol for Leaving Telephone Messages

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| **Approval date:** | **23 June 2021** |
| **Version number:** | **1.3** |
| **Author:** | **David Morgan, Information Governance Officer, FOI Lead and DPO** |
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| **Security classification:** | **Official – Green: unclassified information** |

If you would like this document in an alternative language or format, please contact Corporate Services on 01595 743069.

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## NHS Shetland Document Development Coversheet*

| Name of document | Protocol for Leaving Telephone Messages | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Document reference number | HRPRT001 | **New or Review?** | New |
| Author | David Morgan, Information Governance Officer, FOI Lead and DPO | | |
| Executive lead | Kirsty Brightwell, Medical Director and Caldicott Guardian | | |
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| Proposed groups to present document to: | | |
|---|---|---|
| IGT | IT | Caldicott Guardian |
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| Date | Version | Group | Reason | Outcome |
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| Examples of reasons for presenting to the group | Examples of outcomes following meeting |
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| • Professional input required re: content (PI) | • Significant changes to content required – refer to Executive Lead for guidance (SC) |
| • Professional opinion on content (PO) | • To amend content & re-submit to group (AC&R) |
| • General comments/suggestions (C/S) | • For minor revisions (e.g. format/layout) – no need to re-submit to group (MR) |
| • For information only (FIO) | • Recommend proceeding to next stage (PRO) |
| • For proofing/formatting (PF) | • For upload to Intranet (INT) |
| • Final Approval (FA) | • Approved (A) or Not Approved, revisions required (NARR) |

**\*To be attached to the document under development/review and presented to the relevant group**

**Please record details of any changes made to the document in the table below**

| Date | Record of changes made to document |
|---|---|
| 23/06/2021 | New version of protocol created by David Morgan, Information Governance Officer, FOI Lead and DPO. Saved as version 1.3 |
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# Protocol for Leaving Telephone Messages

There have been several different protocols in place for leaving messages if a patient does not answer the telephone. The intention of this protocol is to provide one system which will be applicable to all NHS Shetland, within both Primary and Secondary Care.

In response to concerns raised by the public over 'number withheld' and 'anonymous' calls from NHS Shetland, changes were made to the telephone system so that calls from GBH or LHC displayed 01595 743001 (the number can't be called back). This Protocol was agreed following discussions with IT, Information Governance and the Caldicott Guardian.

In recognition of the above concerns, **for most calls it will be appropriate to state that the call is from NHS Shetland**. If the person you are calling is not available the default response should be:

> 'I am calling from NHS Shetland. I will call again later'.

## Landline Telephones

If appropriate, further information can be left on an answering machine/service as illustrated in the following examples:

> 'Hello, it's the Health Centre here, please call us back on xxxx'

> 'Hello, it's the Hospital here, please call us back on xxxx'

Providing the telephone number will direct the person to the individual who called them without explicitly disclosing the department they called from. Note, the decision to provide further information and/or a call-back number will depend upon individual circumstances and the sensitivity of the call.

If someone else answers the call, you can consider leaving the same message with that individual. Again, the decision to provide further information and/or a call back number will depend upon individual circumstances and the sensitivity of the call.

## Mobile Telephones

Many patients give their mobile telephone number to healthcare providers as a means of contacting them. However, if the phone is subsequently upgraded or lost, the number is often not updated. For this reason, it is recommended that messages are not left on mobile telephones.

If someone else answers the call, it will be most appropriate to use the default response:

> 'I am calling from NHS Shetland. I will call again later'

**End of document**