

31 May 2012

Gateway Ref: 17658

*Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2NS*

Dear Colleague

**Re: NHS Direct 0845 4647 transition to NHS 111**

This letter reminds you of the principles and guidance agreed by the NHS Executive Group in October 2011 for managing the transition from the NHS Direct 0845 service to NHS 111. These are:

- To safeguard patients at every stage
- To protect the public purse
- To provide continuity of service until alternative arrangements are in place
- To provide continuity of employment for people in roles that will continue to be productive in the NHS 111 context
- To maintain high standards of governance and accountability

NHS 111 commissioners are required to adhere to these principles and follow Cabinet Office guidance in order to prevent any unnecessary frontline staff redundancies and the associated financial liabilities and ensure that NHS Direct staff are treated equitably and fairly. This includes:

- As part of NHS 111 procurements, commissioners will need to demonstrate that they have met Cabinet Office guidelines in respect to the transfer of NHS Direct staff where NHS Direct is not the commissioned service provider
- Following NHS 111 procurements, commissioners will be required to give a specified period of notice - 6 months - of the date from which contracted providers will assume responsibility for taking over 0845 calls from NHS Direct, after the NHS 111 go-live date in that area
- Commissioners will need to demonstrate compliance with both the guiding principles and agreed criteria above before the release of funding from the NHS Direct bundle

Detailed plans have been agreed with SHAs for the transition of calls, staff and funding from the NHS Direct 0845 service to NHS 111 and in order for these to be executed it is imperative that NHS 111 commissioners adhere to the above principles and guidance.

If you have any questions please contact [nhs111@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nhs111@dh.gsi.gov.uk) .

Yours sincerely,

Jim Easton  
**National Director, Improvement and Efficiency**

David Flory  
**Deputy NHS Chief Executive**

CC: Nick Chapman, Chief Executive, NHS Direct