Prioritisation of Patients

A guide to urgency for non-clinical staff in general practice for telephone or patient presentations



An Australian Government Initiative



1. Record patient's phone number

- 2. What is the *name / age* of the patient?
- 3. What is the *nature* of the problem?
- 4. What is the *duration* of the problem?
- 5. What is the severity of the problem?
- 6. Has patient had previous major health problems?

Select a category below and follow instructions.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

- Remain calm and don't panic
- Be aware and respond to the needs of the emergency
- · Assess which patient needs to take priority
- Deal with any injury or illness in order of severity

CALL 000 for ambulance, police or fire

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- Chest pain
- Breathing difficulties/ trouble talking
- Facial swelling & rash
- Collapse / altered consciousness
- Facial / limb weakness
- Extensive burns
- Sick patient you have concerns about

2

- Fitting
- Bleeding (persistent or heavy)
- Spinal or head injury/ trauma
- Snake bite
- Heart palpitations
- In labour / ruptured membranes
- Neck stiffness/altered consciousness

3

- Unable to urinate
- Unwell Infant
- Poisoning/overdose
- Eye injuries / Chemical in the eye.
- Pain (severe)
- Injured limb/ possible fracture

4

- Unwell child/elderly with fever, vomiting, diarrhoea or pain for >24 hours
- Pregnancy:
- Pain or bleeding
- reduced movement
- Abuse or assault
- Visual disturbance
- Patient or carer with extreme concern
- Psychological distress

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- Unwell child/elderly with fever, vomiting, diarrhoea or pain for <24 hours
- Rash (severe)
- Cut / laceration
- Severe Flu-like symptoms

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- Adult with fever, but otherwise well
- Post-op problems
- Eye or ear infections/pain
- Adult with continuous vomiting and/or diarrhoea for >24 hrs



Call 000



Go to Emergency now!



Put call through to the GP or nurse now!



Come to practice now! Advise the GP or nurse about the call.



Come to practice today. Call back if gets worse!



Make an appointment within 24 hours.
Call back if gets worse!





Call GP / nurse for help immediately

- Retrieve patient file
- Document

Interrupt GP / nurse immediately

- Retrieve patient file
- Document

Advise GP or nurse now

- Retrieve patient file
- Document

Discuss with GP or nurse

- Retrieve patient file
- Document

Inform GP or nurse within 30 minutes

- Retrieve patient file
- Document

Inform GP or nurse

- Retrieve patient file
- Document