

**The Guide to basic clinical assessment & ringing the GP.  
 For an acutely unwell resident in an Aged Care Facility**

Residential Aged Care Facility Staff Members Guide: to help provide enough clinical information over the telephone for the GP to decide the course of action. It does not replace clinical care protocols within your facility e.g. relating to falls, or specific resident care plans e.g. diabetic management. The guide may also be useful if you need to ring a locum, ambulance or hospital.

**Step 1 General assessment**

**Assess**

- Does the resident **look unwell**
- Main symptoms** e.g.: distress, pain, difficulty breathing, etc.
- Main physical signs** e.g.: alert, pale, sweating, dehydrated, etc.
- Vital signs:** pulse rate (regular / irregular), temperature, respiratory rate, blood pressure, blood sugar level (BSL)
- Urinalysis:** if results available.
- Consider **resident care plan** and **wishes of resident/relatives** or any **Advance Care Directives**
- Decide on **urgency:** ring the GP or wait till GP available in-hours or call locum or discuss with hospital ED or ring ambulance

**Step 2 Ringing the doctor**

**Before ringing, have in front of you**

- Drug chart** including **allergies**
- Patient notes** (with documented vital signs and assessment-**Step 1**)

**Tell the doctor**

- Who you** are (name and title e.g.: Div1 RN, Div 2 RN, PCA), and **name of resident**
- Main reason** for ringing e.g.: change in cognitive state / alertness, chest pain, abdominal pain, vomiting, resident had a fall, suspected UTI, palliative care, family request, etc
- How long** problem has been present and whether **recurrent**
- Who assessed** the resident (name and title) and what **time?**
- Describe general assessment (Step 1)**
- Who** requested the doctor be rung (ACH staff/ resident/ family)
- What action** has been taken already e.g.: pain relief, anginine, etc.

**Step 3 Action**

**After the telephone call, DOCUMENT everything!!!**

- Name and telephone number of GP / locum and time called.
- Whether GP / locum will attend and date and time expected

**... and implement**

- Immediate action / instructions** e.g.: medication order, monitor resident, call locum, call ambulance, etc.
- Contact family** as required