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Dear Patient

Thank you for taking the time to let us know that you are now expecting to pay more for calling Wye Surgery.

Our previous telephone system was in place for 17 years and the equipment had started to fail. Due to the age of the system, finding parts for repair and replacement was proving costly if not impossible to locate and therefore the Partners took the decision to upgrade.

The new system gives the surgery greater opportunity to meet patients' needs including:-

- One phone number, meaning patients only need to remember one number for Emergencies, Appointments and Results. This also means the surgery will save money by not having to pay for separate lines, thus putting this money back into the practice for patient services.
- The ability to relocate the practice in the event of an emergency without a loss of service to our patients.
- More telephone lines ensuring callers are able to contact us without receiving the engaged tone.
- Patients speaking to the correct department without having to go through reception thus leaving reception free to book appointments.
- The ability to cancel appointments whilst we are closed, thus reducing the DNAs (Did Not Attends) and having more appointments available to book.

Whilst we are aware that the cost to call us may be more for a few of our patients, depending on the type of call package you have with your telephone provider, calling us from a landline will cost no more than it would if you called a local number if you are on a standard BT tariff.

We do have a duty to follow the guidance of The Department of Health and the British Medical Association who both advise that as long as the tariff is equivalent to local rates, and we obtain a written guarantee from our phone supplier that they are charging rates in line with local geographic calls using the OFCOM regulated BT call rate, then we will be deemed to have fulfilled our medical services contract.

I have enclosed a copy of our guarantee from Network Europe Group who are our telephone providers and you can also access more information following their government consultation at <http://www.networkeuropegroup.com/neg-084.html>

We would ask that if you feel you are being charged more to call us from a landline, that you contact your telephone provider and ask how this can be changed.

I hope this explains the reasons for the surgery's decision and trust you will see the benefits as more options and services are added to the practice in the future.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Jo Shepherd  
Practice Manager