

TRUE OR FALSE?

'GPs don't do home visits any more'

FALSE

If a patient comes to the surgery they can be examined and treated more quickly and in a much better environment. However if your doctor knows you are housebound then he or she will visit you at home when required.

'GPs spend less time working for their patients than they used to'

FALSE

Your GP now spends longer with you in the consultation room – an average of 11 minutes compared to 8 minutes 15 years ago. Research shows this delivers better care for patients. The type of work GPs do now is also much more complex. For example, people with diabetes, asthma and other long term conditions are now regularly cared for in GP surgeries. In the past they would have been sent to hospital. It means patients are getting care that is more convenient and closer to their homes.

'The quality of GP care is improving'

TRUE

In 2004 the government brought in a way of measuring the quality of care GPs provide to patients. It was designed to raise standards. In 2005 UK GPs hit nine in ten of these targets (91%). This year they hit nearly 97%.

'You can't see a GP out-of-hours any more'

FALSE

The local Primary Care Organisation is responsible for providing an out-of-hours service when the surgery is closed. They employ GPs to see patients for urgent care and if your condition means you need to see a doctor you will be able to. You may not see a doctor from your own practice and you may be asked to go to an urgent care centre but GPs are on duty to look after you. Your practice can provide you with the details of the local out-of-hours service.

'The government has cut core practice funding for two years running'

TRUE

The amount of money given to GP surgeries has not risen at all in the past two years, but inflation means surgery running costs and staff wages have gone up. In many cases, GPs covered these costs by taking a personal pay cut.