



The Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust telephone rip-off continues

Whilst enormous progress has been achieved by the **fair telecoms campaign**, through elimination of the use of 084 numbers in many sectors ([see below](#)), certain appalling cases remain.

Despite [a direction from the Department of Health in 2009](#), the **Mid Yorkshire Hospital NHS Trust** continues to use several 0844 numbers.

It wholly misrepresents the cost involved [on its website](#).

The actual cost of calling these numbers is made up by adding two elements.

- £ A '**Service Charge**', to the benefit of the Trust (through its telephone service provider), which is set for each number as follows,
0844 811 0010/0844 822 0022/0844 811 8110: **7p per minute**, 0844 902 0004: **6p per minute**.
It is a legal requirement for these figures to be given, along with a reference to the Access Charge, wherever these numbers are published – see [this Ofcom page](#).
- £ An '**Access Charge**', to the benefit of the caller's telephone company, which is set for each tariff and is the same for calls to all premium numbers (those beginning 084, 087, 09 and 118).
For landlines, this is typically around **12p per minute**.
For mobiles, it is up to **55p per minute** in the case of O2 and Vodafone.

We were recently contacted by **Hannah Bailey**, who was told to call 0844 902 0004 to arrange an appointment. This call cost her **£6**, whereas a call to a geographic rate (01/02/03) number would have been inclusive in her calls bundle, and thereby would have incurred no cost. **Hannah** will be happy to offer her own comments.

The **Yorkshire Post** covered this story with our help in 2013 – see [the story](#) and [a related editorial](#). This was before the simpler system of identifying calls costs came into force on 1 July 2015. We can now say with certainty that everybody pays more to call a 0844 number than a 01924 number.

It is an utter disgrace that this hospital remains in breach of a **Department of Health** direction eight years after it was issued.

Our successes

- ft** Every one of the 101 GPs referred to in [this BBC Radio Leeds broadcast](#) has given up its 084 number. The same applies to all bar one of the other [NHS bodies listed here in 2014](#).
- ft** The NHS Direct 0845 number has been replaced by 111 – free to call for everyone.
- ft** All central government departments have switched away from 084 numbers. The DWP is currently going one step further, by switching to numbers that are always free to call.
- ft** It is now illegal to use a 084 / 087 number for contact between a customer and any organisation. There are some exceptions, but the compliance rate is surprisingly high.

Other Work in Progress

Follow [@fairtelecoms](#) to keep up to date, but rip-off ticket lines are a major current focus, notably the **First Direct Arena** and many unhappy Peter Kay fan – see [this Sun story](#).

