



fair telecoms campaign

press cutting



NHS Sussex statement on GPs using premium rate 084 phone numbers in breach of their NHS contract

The following is taken from the [West Sussex County Times, published on Saturday 9 March 2013.](#)

The same statement was [read out by BBC Surrey and Sussex on Wednesday 27 February 2013.](#)

The **fair telecoms campaign** has responded with a [commentary on the highlighted points.](#)

A spokesman for NHS Sussex said:

“No practice in Sussex uses a premium rate number. However, 084 numbers can cost more to call than other landlines.

“The exact cost depends on your individual phone package. In the last few years, across the country, many practices bought 084 numbers as they can help with directing callers to the right person.

Practices are now required to check whether a person calling their practice pays more than the cost of a call to an 01 number - a geographical telephone number.

If that is the case then the practice must take action.

“Terminating 084 numbers before the end of the contract can incur heavy fees - in order to make the best use of public money some GP practices have taken actions such as offering an 01 number alongside the 084 number or calling patients back. This is in line with national requirements.”

“We take our responsibility on this matter very seriously and continue to work with GP practices to ensure there are no barriers to patients contacting their GP practice.”

David Hickson 

Monday, 11 March 2013