

We love to hear what you have to say...

Readers Letters

Sir

Thank you for your article in the last Clarion explaining BT's choice to refuse service. I have had this in place for some months now and got rid of most unwanted callers - it really works! Perhaps you or your readers can come up with a sensible suggestion on how to beat the ridiculous farce of directory enquiries 118 118 etc - it is a total shambles and obviously designed to confuse all, cause vulnerability and rip everyone off.

To me there seems something morally wrong that people can be charged for essential information at all just to use a service that charges you again? Perhaps a group could form to buy between them a 192 computer disk with all directory enquiries numbers on then spread the word via your newspapers to invite anyone to phone the group member who has it on their computer (paying for a normal call) to be given the information.

I suspect however, that the greedy profit hunters would cry foul and have it outlawed. Just a thought.

Yours truly
**William Eagles
Whitmore**

Mrs JR from Smallthorne writes..

Dear Clarion

My husband, already disabled was taken to the N. Staffs Royal Infirmary in May with breathing difficulties. Waiting on a trolley to be transferred into a ward the porters came to transfer him on to a wheelchair and dropped him breaking his one leg that was usable. The only reaction we got from all concerned that they were unaware that there was a 'no lifting policy' on my husband's records.

An apology and genuine concern would have made us less bitter, but there is clearly no chance of that. We are all so angry about this that legal action is being taken via my daughter's union.

Doris F of Newcastle wrote to The Clarion with her mixture of feelings towards the local NHS facilities

Dear Sirs

You asked for opinions good or bad about the local hospital. When I was rushed in with heart problems this year I experienced during the 3 weeks spent on the ward a remarkable contrast in care, efficiency general concern for patients and enthusiasm in all departments. One part of me is full of praise for my problem being sorted out yet the other couldn't help noticing a big attitude shortfall and now with time to reflect it could be put down to one factor alone - it depended who was in charge of the ward at a particular time.

When certain shifts produced a rather large military style dominant character with the title of Staff Nurse I couldn't help thinking about years gone by - the type portrayed by Hattie Jacques of "Carry On" fame, because this look-a-like and act-a-like old fashioned matron certainly did the business. Respect, tinged with almost fear oozed from her understudies, people moved faster, held their heads higher and generally seemed to get things done. When she was in charge it was as if my recovery rate increased.

I would like to thank all concerned who looked after me and it's perhaps a little naive to expect a step backwards in time but surely the highly paid National Health managers might agree that I have a point?

Dear Sirs,

After reading your front page article about the man who had his cancer scare sorted out in Spain I called into a clinic recently whilst there on holiday. I saw an ENT specialist and told her about my private sinus operation done back home a couple of years ago and that I had been told repeatedly since that the embarrassing, runny and unpleasant nasal discharge I had was to be expected and put up with.

She tactfully made me put away my Spanish phrasebook as her English was clearly better than mine and then promptly diagnosed mild sinusitis. A course of antibiotics, special sprays and advice as to what atmospheres to avoid for a while was followed by a special courier delivery the next day of nebuliser breathing equipment to use for a week.

The doctor even went to the trouble of phoning me at my hotel before the follow up appointment to see if I was behaving well and sticking to the instructions!

The problem has now gone, seemingly for good, and the bill - a sniff (just a pun) at 240 euros (£168) seemed amazingly cheap! I am extremely grateful to Doctora Palacio of the Clinica de Nuestra Senora de America and thanks to The Clarion for causing me to have the idea to pop in there in the first place!

**Mr Arnold Jackson
Penkull**

46 Kingsway West
Westlands
Newcastle
Staffs ST5 3PU

Dear Ed

I read with interest the feature on the front page of The Clarion issue 3 concerning the Newcastle shopkeeper thought to have cancer and finally being treated in Spain for a non-malignant lipoma.

I had a real tumour and my treatment on the

NHS could not have been more different.

Seeing my GP complaining of irregular bowel movements, he examined me and was concerned enough to contact a consultant at the City General Hospital, Stoke.

6 days later I saw the consultant and had a biopsy taken.

10 days after that I saw the consultant who was certain that it was cancerous but required a further biopsy. I was scheduled for surgery 2 weeks later, subject to the results of the second biopsy. This was postponed for 2 weeks to allow for radiation treatment advised by the Medical Team to shrink the tumour and make the surgeon's job easier and more effective.

The colostomy surgery was successfully carried out shortly afterwards.

The treatment I received at all times during this surgery, post operative treatment and subsequently was first class and all on the NHS. When the consultant first diagnosed possible cancer and I enquired what the time criteria for the operation was, he replied that if I had planned a holiday for the end of the month he would advise I took the holiday and he would schedule surgery afterwards. However if I had wanted to postpone it would be too late.

As a precaution against the return of cancer the medical team insisted I have 30 weeks chemotherapy.

I have volunteered to participate in the trial for a new anti-cancer drug for 5 years. This is the least I can do in return for the new lease of life I have received from the NHS.

I hope this will give hope and encouragement to anyone similarly diagnosed with the 'C'.

I am a retired IT Engineer with no connections with the medical profession so there was no preferential treatment involved.

Yours sincerely

Norman Wood (Mr)

Dear CCC

Thank you for recommending, last year, one of your battery operated bath lifts. We had anticipated moving so when it came to the crunch a deciding factor was that we could easily bring our useful device with us. Had the necessary £5,000 commitment been made fitting a walk-in bath conversion at our bungalow in Newcastle we might have still been there along with George's awful asthma problem - but it's much better and healthier here on the coast!

From George and Maria Francis
(formerly of Bradwell)
Nivens Court, Brighton

Dear Sirs

After experiencing two years' use of my CCC bath lift I can now see why you made the criticisms that you did of walk-in bathing units. I am over the moon but my brother, luckily for him quite wealthy and wanting "the best", had such a beast installed by a national mobility company and is now having regrets as the door seal regularly leaks. They are sorting it out but he could do without the inconvenience.

I'll be in touch when I can afford my electric bed!

**Mr B. Lamont
Trent Vale**