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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The First Ever Guide to 0300 Telephone Numbers for the Healthcare Sector is Published.

Windsor Telecom, the UK's leading provider of memorable phone numbers and inbound call solutions, has published the first ever guide to the new 0300 telephone range for the healthcare sector. The move comes in response to recommendations from Health Secretary Alan Johnson and Lord Norman Warner, who has publicly advocated the use of 0300 numbers in doctors' surgeries, dentists and opticians, for patients accessing these services.

The free, 7 page guide outlines what 0300 numbers are and how they differ from other memorable telephone numbers. The document also considers the reasons why many healthcare organisations are now choosing memorable telephone numbers over standard landline numbers, with the demand for smarter call systems (caller options for patients, call divert out of hours etc.) largely being accredited for this.

Additionally, the paper explores the true costs involved in setting up and running an 0300 number.

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0300 numbers have become a priority for the healthcare sector ever since Lord Warner sent a letter to all Primary Care Trusts drawing attention to the Central Office of Information (COI) guidance on telephone numbering. The COI document suggested that healthcare providers consider adopting an 0300 telephone number so that people 'do not have to pay over the odds to contact their local services' – a stance shared by communications regulator Ofcom and more recently, Health Secretary Alan Johnson.

Currently around one in ten GP practices now use 0844 numbers as the primary form of contact for their patients and this has led to widespread condemnation by the national press. Headlines such as “Doctors' surgeries 'ripping off' patients with premium rate call lines” and “Patients charged up to 40p a minute to call family doctors” are frequently appearing in broadsheet and tabloid news. These articles mainly focus on the costs incurred by patients who are dialling these numbers to access their local services and the fact that some healthcare organisations are actually making money from each call. This process of ‘revenue sharing’ is not possible with 0300 numbers, as explained in the free paper.

Neil Sherring, chief executive of Windsor Telecom, said, “We decided to produce this guide due to the increase in enquiries from our colleagues in the healthcare sector and it’s proving incredibly popular. It’s only been available since the start of July and we have already had to get another batch of the paper version printed! It’s a must for anyone working in healthcare who is considering using a memorable number for their organisation or who already has an 08 number and is concerned about the negative publicity and sometimes exaggerated costs surrounding these numbers. 0300 numbers are specifically designated for the public sector and the great thing is that they cost the same to call as a standard 01 and 02 numbers – even from a mobile phone. This guide outlines everything you need to know about the caller friendly 0300 numbers and it’s free!”

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The first ever guide to 0300 telephone numbers for the healthcare sector is available from Windsor Telecom's website: www.windsor-telecom.co.uk/03

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

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About 0300 numbers

- 0300 numbers are non-geographic numbers that are specifically designated for public sector and not-for-profit organisations
- 0300 numbers cost the same to call as standard 01 and 02 numbers, even from a mobile phone
- 0300 numbers are included as part of the inclusive call minutes and discount schemes offered by mobile and landline providers
- Revenue sharing (where the dialled organisation receives a share of the cost of the call) is not possible with 0300 numbers
- Like all memorable non-geographic numbers, 0300 numbers allow organisations to smarten up the way they deal with calls with caller options, call queuing, call statistics, call divert etc.
- Windsor Telecom offers an extensive range of highly memorable 0300 numbers.

About Windsor Telecom

- Windsor Telecom is fast becoming the foremost authority on 03 numbers
- Windsor Telecom is the UK's leading provider of memorable phone numbers and inbound call solutions.
- Windsor Telecom provide bespoke call plans and services which give customers incredible flexibility and control over their inbound calls, without any technical knowledge. Solutions will enhance productivity and sharpen competitiveness.
- Business XL magazine, an award winning magazine for growing companies, voted Windsor Telecom a '21st Century Business Star' and 'One of the best 50 companies in the UK today'.