

CONTINUITY OF CARE SERVICE OUT-OF HOURS GENERAL PRACTITIONER SERVICE (IL SERVIZIO DI CONTINUITÀ ASSISTENZIALE – ex Guardia medica)

What it is

- This is the service which, in the absence of your G.P., guarantees basic medical assistance for situations that cannot be postponed, i.e. in the case of health problems for which you cannot wait for your G.P. or paediatrician's practice to open.
- The service is available at night or during bank holidays and days before bank holidays.
- The continuity of care physician can:
 - make home visits which cannot be delayed
 - prescribe medicines for therapies that cannot be delayed, or that are necessary for the continuation of therapies the interruption of which could worsen the patient's conditions
 - issue medical certificates in case of strict necessity for a maximum period of three days
 - recommend hospitalization.

How to access

The service can be accessed through a special phone number you can find from your ASL - *Azienda Sanitaria Locale* (Local Health Enterprise).

On the basis of the assessment of the patient's need, the continuity of care physician can give medical advice by phone, by an examination at a clinic (where possible), or a home visit.

It is the doctor's responsibility to decide, on the basis of National and/or regional guidelines, whether a home visit is necessary.

When to call

For health problems which arise at night or during bank holidays and days before bank holidays, when your G.P. is not in service, and for which you cannot wait.

- The service is available:
 - at night: from Monday to Sunday, from 8.00 pm to 8.00 am.
 - by day: - for days before bank holidays, from 10.00 am to 8.00 pm
 - on bank holidays, from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm

When not to call

For emergencies or urgent health matters (for which you should directly contact the 1-1-8 emergency Service).

To book specialist examinations and visits.