**Information for Patients**

**Non NHS Services – Frequently Asked Questions**

**Isn't the NHS supposed to be free?**

The NHS provides most healthcare and healthcare services free of charge to UK residents, but there are some exceptions.

**What can I be charged for?**

Examples of non NHS services for which medical practices can charge their patients are in the table at the end of this information leaflet.

**Surely the doctor is being paid anyway?**

It is important to understand that many GPs are not employed by the NHS, they are self-employed and they have to cover their costs including staff, buildings, heating, lighting, etc in the same way as any small business. The NHS covers these costs for general medical services, but for non-NHS work, the fees charged by GPs contribute towards their costs. Therefore, professional fees charged must reflect a contribution to these costs as well as professional time.

**Who decides how much I pay?**

Individual practices decide how much to charge for non-NHS services. There are no standard charges and ‘price fixing’ between practices is not allowed.

**How do I book a medical?**

Please complete the attached form and return it to reception along with any paperwork that you have. To make an appointment for an HGV medical, complete the attached form and return it to reception together with your HGV form, which must have had the vision part completed by an optician prior to booking. A member of staff will be able to make an appointment for you. You will always be asked to pay for a medical appointment prior to booking, unless an organisation is paying for the medical on your behalf and we have their written confirmation that they will be responsible for any fees incurred.

**When can I collect my documents?**

The doctors generally try to complete forms, documents, letters or reports for patients, within two working weeks.

Please do not enclose a stamped addressed envelope with any documents as it will not be posted, e-mailed or faxed to you or directly to any other organisation from the surgery. You are required to collect the documents from the surgery.

Please do not expect your doctor to process forms overnight. Time spent on this type of work takes the doctors away from patient care and other demands on their time. The provision of NHS services will always take priority.

**Why are you not always able to complete forms or perform a medical?**

There are many reasons why a doctor will not be able to perform the work requested. If your request is declined the reason will be explained to you. Certain work will not be carried out by your doctor, including the following:

* Certificate of Fitness for sports such as Diving, Parachute Jumps or Marathons
* Occupational Health or Health Assessment reports for employment purposes
* Forms or letters for private diet plan or laser eye treatment companies
* Letters to local housing authorities
* Confirmation of ID
* Letters for the DWP, ESA, DLA or PIP
* Insurance forms will not be done if the patient was not seen by a GP to verify the illness at the time they were ill.
* Soul & Conscience letters, unless the patient is seriously ill.
* Sick note for school

**Why do I pay for just a signature?**

When a doctor signs a certificate or completes a report, it is a condition of remaining on the Medical Register that they only sign what they know to be true. In order to complete even the simplest of forms, therefore, the doctor might have to check the patient's entire medical record. Carelessness or an inaccurate report can have serious consequences for the doctor.

**What can I do to help?**

* If you have several forms requiring completion, present them together
* Contact the practice as soon as you receive forms
* Book a medical as early as possible
* Complete your part of any documentation correctly and ensure that if there is a section regarding giving your consent to release the information required, this is signed and dated.

**Cost of services**

A guide to the minimum costs of services is listed in the table below. Should the work you are requesting be more complicated than standard, and will therefore take the doctor longer to carry out, the fee will be more than the guide minimum fee shown. In this event we will contact you before we undertake the work to obtain your agreement to proceed.

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| **CERTIFICATES** |  |
| Private sick-note | **£30** |
| Private Prescription | **£30** |
| GP letter | **£30** |
| Police Scotland – Firearms Certificate | **£75** |
| Power of Attorney/Guardianship/Certificate of Incapacity | **£150 and 30 min appt** |
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| **MEDICALS/REPORTS** |  |
| Driving Medicals (LGV, PCV, taxi driver etc) | **£180 and 30 min appt** |
| Holiday Cancellation/Fitness to travel | **£75** |
| Medical report or consultation(15 mins) | **£75** |
| Medical report or consultation (30 mins) | **£150** |
| Medical report or consultation (45mins) | **£225** |
| Medical report or consultation (60 mins) | **£300** |
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| **MISCELLANEOUS** |  |
| Private Blood Tests | **Lab fee & £60** |
| Jury Duty | **Free of charge** |
| Letter from Dr to confirm patient of practice | **£30** |
| Standard student letters | **£30** |