

Darwin Medical Practice

Requests for Forms and Letters from a GP

Your GP may be able to undertake such work for you but, as this is a non-NHS (private) service, you will be charged for this. Please leave payment of £30 (full payment of £75 for Firearms Licence) and the completed request form at reception with any necessary explanation. (Occasionally this amount may increase depending on the amount of work required by the Doctor. This will be confirmed before progressing with the form).

Please note the indicative fees list attached together with some further information explaining why we charge for this service. Please let us know if you need to be advised of the fee (if a range is indicated) prior to completion.

If agreed, we aim to complete the work that you have requested within 6 weeks, but please note that we have to prioritise NHS work. If an appointment is required to fulfil the request this may take longer.

Request Form

Date

(PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Full Name:

Date of Birth:

Full Address:

.....Postcode:.....

Contact Tel No:

Please state the reason for your request, and explain briefly what you want the letter to contain or include the form that you would like completing:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

FOR SURGERY USE ONLY:

Date Request Received:..... Surgery Branch for collection:

Fee to be charged: £ Please tick to confirm the **correct** fee has been paid

Name of GP to complete request:

Date Completed:

Darwin Medical Practice

FEEES FOR NON-NHS SERVICES

These fees are an indication of the amount that the practice will charge. However, Doctors may charge a different fee according to the complexity and the time it takes to complete each form.

Certificates and Forms

£

Simple Certificate, to include

To Whom It May Concern letters (short)

30.00

Seat belt exemption

30.00

Shot gun licence- initial report (subject to doctor's agreement)*

75.00

Forms of variable complexity, to include

Sickness/accident insurance benefit claim form

30.00-90.00

Holiday Cancellation Certificate

30.00-90.00

Fitness to Travel Certificate

30.00-90.00

Medical Examination and Reports

Fee for a medical consultation – private patient – per hour

225.00

Pre-employment medicals, LGV, PCV and HGV renewal

130.00

Other reports requiring a consultation or examination; fee based on hourly private rate.

Prescriptions

Private prescription

13.00

Private sick note

20.00

Certificates, forms and reports that the Doctors cannot complete

Doctors are unable to complete the below;

- Fit to fly forms / letters
- Extreme sport waiver forms e.g.: skydiving, diving with sharks etc
- Power of Attorney / Capacity Assessment
- Proof of identification

Why do GP's charge fees? Your questions answered:

Isn't the NHS supposed to be free?

The National Health Service provides most health care to most people free of charge, but there are exceptions: Prescription charges have existed since 1951, and there are a number of other services for which fees are charged. Sometimes the charge is made to cover some of the cost of treatment, for example, dental fees. In other cases it is because the service is not covered by the NHS, for example, medical reports for insurance companies, claim forms for referral for private care and other letters and forms which require the doctor to review the patient's medical records.

Surely the doctor is being paid anyway?

It is important to understand that GPs are not employed by the NHS. They are self-employed, and they have to cover their costs – staff, buildings, heating, lighting etc – in the same way as any small business. The NHS pays the doctor for specific NHS work, but for non-NHS work a fee is charged to cover the doctor's costs.

What is covered by the NHS and what is not?

The Government's contract with GPs covers medical services to NHS patients. In recent years, more and more organisations have been involving doctors in a range of non-medical work.

Examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge their NHS patients are:

- Certain travel vaccinations
- Private medical insurance reports
- Holiday cancellation claim forms
- Referral for private care forms
- Letters requested by, or on behalf of, the patient

Examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge other institutions are:

- Medical reports for an insurance company
- Some reports for the DSS/Benefits Agency
- Examinations for local authority employees

Why does it sometimes take my GP a long time to complete my request?

Time spent completing forms and preparing reports/letters takes the GP away from the medical care of his/her patients. GPs have a very heavy workload and paperwork takes up an increasing amount of their time. Priority is given to NHS work and completion of non-NHS reports and letters can sometimes be delayed.

I only need a doctor's signature, what's the problem?

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. Therefore, in order to complete even the simplest of forms, the doctor need to check the patient's entire medical record. Carelessness or an inaccurate report can have serious consequences for the doctor with the General Medical Council or even the Police.

DARWIN MEDICAL PRACTICE

Guidance on requesting letters

1. Do not make appointments to request forms or letters. Please complete the form in this pack and give it to reception with your payment.
2. Do not ask for reports or letters that are not required. We are advised by many organisations, for example, housing, schools and probation service, that letters are not required. Also it is not advised that GPs sign passport applications; please see the information below.
3. Do not expect your GP to process forms overnight; urgent requests may mean that a doctor has to make special arrangements to process the form quickly, and this may cost more.

Information regarding passport applications

The Passport Office state that doctors should not sign passport applications unless they are also well known to you or a good friend. If you do ask your GP then this is classed as private work and you will be charged. You can ask another person in a position of trust to sign such documents free of charge (there is a list on the Passport website, link below).

For further information please go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications/accepted-occupations-for-countersignatories>

Information regarding requests for sick notes/letters for schoolchildren

The following national guidance has been sent out to all GPs, school and colleges by the General Practitioners' Council / British Medical Association:

Examinations and sickness certificates for school children

It should be noted that GPs do not provide sick notes for schoolchildren. When children are absent from school owing to illness, schools may request a letter from a parent or guardian, and this is no different during an exam period. However, children who have missed exams due to illness are frequently told by schools that a note from a doctor is required; but this cannot be provided by a GP. Aside from the fact that parents/guardians are responsible for excusing their children from school, GPs cannot provide retrospective sickness certification. When a child suffers from a long-term condition, any certification will be provided by the responsible specialist.

GPC has sought and received confirmation from the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator that Awarding Organisations make no requirement for pupils to obtain a medical certificate in support of their application for special consideration. Students are asked for information in support of their application, but this may take the form of a statement by the school. The Joint Council for Qualifications has confirmed that as far as they are concerned, if a student was absent from an examination as a result of illness and has the support of the school or centre to be absent, special consideration will be granted on that basis. Awarding organisations do not insist that medical proof is provided.

For further information please go to:

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/supporting-pupils-at-school>

Information regarding HGV (Group2)

As an alternative to submitting these requests for a GP to complete, patients are able to request these to be processed by an independent company. D4Drivers can be contacted on 0300 303 0668 or via their website. They have 117 sites around the UK.

Letters requested for Benefits/Department of Work and Pensions

The South Staffordshire Local Medical Committee have created a standard letter to give to the agency if you are asked to supply a GP letter regarding your benefits and we have enclosed a copy you can use.

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

'Suite 5b' Anson Court, Horninglow Street, Burton on Trent, Staffs DE14 1NG

Tel: 01283 534384 Fax: 01283 562824

Email: enquiry@sslmc.co.uk

Website: www.sslmc.co.uk

To Whom It May Concern

Benefits Reform – GP letters

South Staffordshire Local Medical Committee (LMC) is the representative body for all GPs in South Staffordshire. This letter has been produced by the LMC for use by GP practices.

The Benefits System is undergoing major changes and this is impacting on many people across the country in the amount of money they receive and also the benefits they may be eligible for.

GPs provide General Medical Services to their patients and we are not in a position to administer nor to police the Benefits System. The LMC considers that it is not appropriate for the GP to be asked for letters of support or letter to confirm care needs. GPs are not resourced to provide this service. Time taken up with paperwork is time taken away from direct patient care. There are contractual and agreed methods for GPs to provide medical information to the Department for Work and Pensions. These are sent to the GP practice and GPs respond directly to the departments requesting information. Therefore we cannot respond to your request for a letter.

Please show this document to the service who has asked for the GP letter. The service can contact South Staffordshire Local Medical Committee for more information.

Yours sincerely

Dr David Dickson
LMC Secretary

Chairman: Dr Vijay Singh Secretary: Dr David Dickson
Treasurer: Dr Claire McKinlay