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**Why do GP’s charge for some services**

**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.

**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 covers these costs for NHS work, but for non-NHS work the fee has 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 whole range of non-medical work.

Sometimes the only reason that GPs are asked is because they are in a position of trust in the community, or because an insurance company or employer wants to be sure that information provided is true and accurate.

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

* Certain travel vaccinations
* Private medical insurance reports
* Private sick notes
* Private Letters.

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
* Examination of local authority employees.

**Why does it sometimes take my GP a long time to complete my form?**Time spent completing forms and preparing reports takes the GP away from the medical care of his or her patients.  Most GPs have a very heavy workload - the majority work up to 70 hours a week - and paperwork takes up an increasing amount of their time, so many GPs find they have to take some paperwork home at night and weekends. Private admin work handed in will be allocated the following Friday for completion which will take up to 2 weeks.

**I only need a doctor's signature - what is the problem?**When a doctor signs a medical 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 with the General Medical Council or even the Police.

**What will I be charged?**
The BMA recommends that GPs tell patients in advance if they will be charged, and how much.  It is up to the individual doctor to decide how much to charge, but the BMA produces lists of suggested fees which many doctors use (as does this practice). See Appendix A below:

NB all fees are payable when the patient collects paperwork or following consultation with clinician/unless stated otherwise.

Any services required urgently or which take longer than normal to complete may be charged at a higher rate. An invoice will be generated by the practice payment can be made in cash or BACS by arrangement. We are sorry we are unable to take any debit/credit card/chq payments

**What can I do to help?**

Not all documents need signature by a doctor.  For example, you could ask another person in a position of trust, who may be willing to sign a passport application free of charge.

* If you have several forms requiring completion, present them all at once and ask the receptionist/GP if he/ she is prepared to complete them all at once at a reduced fee.
* Do not expect the GP to process forms overnight; urgent requests may mean that the doctor has to make special arrangements to process the form quickly, and this will incur an increased cost as this workload will then take priority over other workload.
* **Some private admin charges are payable up front before the GP completes the work to avoid unnecessary delays to you please for these as soon as possible you have made the request to the practice**.
* If your admin work requires you to undertake a medical, if you require an eye test please make an appointment with your optician prior to your GP appt and bring the results along with you.
* On arrival for your appointment please speak to reception who will then advise you to use the health station to undertake questionnaires, BP etc

**How Can I Pay**

* Unfortunately the practice can no longer accept cheques as these are no longer guaranteed.
* Due to the cost to the practice and the patient we do not accept card payments.
* We accept cash payments or you can pay by BACs please ask at reception for further details.

Appendix A

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| Private Admin Fees  | Notes  |
| Private Admin Work | Net | VAT | Gross | inc VAT |   |
| Private Sick note | £25.00 | £5.00 | £30.00 | inc vat |   |
| Shotgun License  | £62.50 | £12.50 | £75.00 | inc Vat |   |
| Holiday Cancellation form  | £30.00 |   | £30.00 | na |   |
| Foster Care Forms  |   |   |   | inc VAT | Set fee paid for by council  |
| Private Prescription  | £15.00 | £0.00 | £15.00 | na |   |
| Private Referral letter with 5 days  | £25.00 |   | £25.00 | na |   |
| To Whom it man concern  | £25.00 | £5.00 | £30.00 | inc VAT  |   |
| Private Consultation GP  | £37.00 |   | £37.00 | na | per 10 mins  |
| Private consultation Nurse  | £25.00 |   | £25.00 | na | per 10 mins  |
| GP Medical (report no exam) | £92.25 | £18.25 | £109.50 | inc VAT | Min dependant on time taken  |
| HGV/PSV/Taxi Driver/adoption inc Exam | £169.50 | £33.90 | £203.40 | inc VAT  | Max dependant on time taken  |
| Gp report letter no Exam | £62.50 | £12.50 | £75.00 | inc VAT  |   |
| Childminder Offsted | £84.51 | £16.90 | £101.41 | inc VAT | **Paid in Advance**  |
| Simple insurance form  | £25.00 |   | £25.00 | na |   |
| Emigration Medical Exam  | £250.00 | £50.00 | £300.00 | inc VAT |   |
| Copy of medical records  |   |   |   |   | No charge - patient given on-line access, please speak to a receptionist. If excessive request, then fee will be applied 50p per copy Max £50 |
| Private blood test (consultation)  | £25.00 |   | £25.00 | no VAT | extra fees per blood test |
| DNA Testing  | £37.00 |   | £37.00 | no VAT  |   |
| Access to records under GDPR  |   |   |   |   | free access for patients for first request no fee.  |
| Multiple requests for access to records are chargeable  |   |   |   |   |   |
| copy of brief computerised records  |   |   |   |   | £10-£30 depending on detail |
| Copy of full manual or combination of manual/computer records  |   |   | £50.00 |   |   |
| Individual photocopies of medical records for patient own use |   |   | £0.50 |   | per sheet  |
| copy of blood results  |   |   | £0.50 |   | per sheet  |
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