

Non-NHS Services and SARs

Why does my doctor charge fees?

GPs are not employed by the NHS, they are self-employed and they have to cover their costs in the same way as any small business. The government's contract with GPs covers medical services to NHS patients. The NHS covers the costs for NHS work only. In recent years, more and more organisations have been involving Doctors in a whole range of non-NHS work. This work is not funded by the government, so GPs have to charge a fee to cover their time and other expenses. Payment will be requested before we undertake the work.

Our Fees for Non -NHS services

Why does it sometimes take my GP a long time to complete my form/ letter?

We have a standard 28 (working) day turnaround for these requests. There may be times when we are unfortunately not able to provide the information you have requested within this time frame, this is usually due to the pressure on the GPs workload as, understandably, clinical work and caring for our patient's health needs must take priority.

Do GPs have to do non- NHS work for their patients?

Your GP may decline a request for a letter or completion of a report. To ensure your request is appropriate please refer to the following list:

Available services

Insurance paperwork
Medical reports or GP letters which state confirmed conditions, diagnoses, medications, immunisations, results and are factual in nature (not opinion or prognosis).
Some DSS/Benefits agency reports (e.g. Universal Credit
Personal Independence Payments (PIP)
DVLA
Holiday cancellation
Reports for Solicitors
Probation Service
Home Office
Student Finance England (SFE)
Disabled Students Allowances (DSA)
Armed Forces

Unavailable services

Identity or Address Verification
Passport or driving licence certifications
Shotgun and firearm certificates including renewals
Fit to Fly (FTF) Certificate / Fitness for travel letter
Sports Medical Certificates (fitness for clubs, gym membership, sporting events etc)
Overseas Employment Medicals and paperwork (Such as Seasonal Camps, resort work etc)
Employment / pre-employment medicals and paperwork or occupational health opinion (e.g., Police, MOD, NMC Validation)

Blood Transfusion Service
Adoption / Fostering medical and paperwork
Vocational Licence paperwork and medicals (e.g. LGV, HGV, PCV, Taxi)

Application Support / GP Letter of Opinion (such as housing, bus passes, blue badges, academic extensions, prognosis etc)
Specialist Medical Forms requesting opinions outside of normal GP remit (e.g. occupational health, diving)

This list contains some examples and is not exhaustive. We reserve the right to refuse private work for any reason. We are also not usually able to facilitate requests for the doctor to write the letter in a specific way using specific wording. The doctor will write what is supported factually by your medical record.

We understand that patients are often wrongly advised to get a letter from their GP. More information about specific requests can be found below.

Fitness to...

Fit To: Fly, Dive, Skydive, Parachute Jump, Bungee Jump, Run a Marathon etc.

GMC guidance says all doctors must work within the limits of their competence, make clear the limits of their knowledge and make sure information in any document they sign is accurate.

As General Practitioners, we are not able to certify you as 'Fit To' participate in any of the above. This is outside of our area of expertise, for example we are not trained in Aviation medicine and so are unable to state whether you are fit to fly. A specially qualified clinician is most appropriately placed to do this and can perform any required investigations (such as an ECG, 24 hour blood pressure monitoring, etc.).

We would recommend that you find a suitable private service offering this assessment.

We can provide you with a summary of your medical record (detailing your past medical history and current medication) free-of-charge.

Fitness to join a gym

The risk that harm would come to you by exercising is low, however we cannot say that it is 100% safe for anyone to exercise. The risk is entirely between you and your gym instructor, following the guidelines at the gym of your choice.

Firearms Licences

We are unable to assess patients for suitability in applying for a Firearms Certificate or renewal due to our conscientious objections to the holding of firearms. We follow British Medical Association (BMA) advice by supplying a free-of-charge letter stating that as a practice we have a conscientious objection to signing Firearms Licences. This can be given to

the police who can then organise your Firearms Licence. The police may advise that you obtain a copy of your medical records. If this is the case then you can request this via a Subject Access Request (SAR).

Letters about missing court appearances

Missing court is a serious matter. We will only provide a letter to the court if we are requested to do so by the court. Your solicitor will advise you further.

School Requests for Confirmation of Illness

GPs do not provide sick notes for school children. Parents/guardians are responsible for excusing their children from school. 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. 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.

Examinations

The GPC (general practitioners committee) 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.

Universities

If your university requests that you provide a letter from your doctor following absence through illness, then the university must request this in writing, accompanied by a signed and dated consent from the patient for the sharing of their medical information. The university will be invoiced for a medical report at the appropriate rate.

Letters of Support

E.g. DWP appeals, Housing applications, Blue badges

GPs receive frequent requests for letters of support. As we can only produce a factual letter from your records, it makes sense for you to do this yourself at no expense to you. All you

need to do is to print the problem list and consultations within your medical history and then ensure you reference these in your application.

A chronological summary printout of conditions can be provided on completion of a Subject Access Request (SAR) if you are unsure of the date of your diagnosis. The practice will have up to 21 working days to complete this request. This is free for initial requests under GDPR legislation.

The assessors are looking at how your conditions are disabling you in your daily life. Therefore, it is the way you demonstrate your difficulties in your application that will help you.

We have provided some useful contacts shown below to help you:

Citizens Advice Bureau - Offers advice on a range of issues and may complete a benefits check for you. Find your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Disability Information and Advice Line – DIAL UK - Tel: 0808 800 3333

Disability Rights UK - Factsheets on benefits, tax credits and independent living from disability rights uk

DWP

GPs are not responsible for making decisions on people's benefit entitlement. The department of working pensions already has processes in place to request the appropriate information from GPs to enable DWP to make such decisions.

The DWP will contact your GP or healthcare professional directly to obtain medical evidence when you submit a PIP or ESA claim, the information is then sent to the DWP as part of your claim process. They will be responsible for paying any fee to the doctor providing the report. We are therefore unable to provide additional letters of support as the information we provide will be included in the report requested by the DWP.

APPEAL of DWP Decision

Having consulted DWP guidance to GPs, a letter of support will have no bearing on your application.

Blue Badge Applications

You have to apply through your local council - your GP can't help you get a Blue Badge. Your local council might also arrange an appointment to visit you - they'll let you know if you need this.

Applying for a Blue Badge – [Click here](#)

Housing applications

Whilst we appreciate that housing problems can be stressful; this is a matter for the council housing office. If the council requires additional medical information, they will send a specific form to the GP surgery.

More support can be found at [Shelter England -Click here](#)

[NHS APP- Access to your online records](#)

PLEASE **[CLICK HERE](#)** TO SET UP NHS App SO YOU CAN ACCESS YOUR RECORDS ONLINE

If you struggle with setting up online accounts, please ask a friend or family member for help as this is the quickest and easiest method to view a summary of your medical record.

If you still feel that a letter would be beneficial, and you'd like to request it from the practice, please fill in the form below as fully as possible and a member of staff will get back to you with the cost of producing this and the timeframes.

[Patient access to their medical records](#) **[\(SAR - Subject Access Request\)](#)**

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which was implemented in the UK through the Data Protection Act 2018, gives individuals the right of access to their personal data from any health and care organisation that holds records on them.

This right is commonly referred to as "Subject access"

A data subject access request form will need to be completed; signed & ID seen before we are able to complete these requests.

In most cases you will not be charged a fee for a SAR. However, we can charge a 'reasonable fee' for the administrative costs of complying with a request if it is manifestly unfounded or excessive, or if an individual requests further copies of their data.

**Free (online access)

Medical records copies for Solicitors**

**Charges will apply if repeat requests are made

Copy of full records including Lloyd George records**

Computer held records only**

If you need to request a Subject Access Request please contact the Practice to complete the form.