

University Health Service

Handling of requests for investigations and treatment

GP practices are increasingly being asked to undertake work for NHS secondary care teams and for private providers. This additional workload puts added pressure onto practices. This affects many members of the practice team; GP time is required to review letters and results, nursing team time to obtain samples and reception and admin staff are involved in booking appointments and giving out results.

At the University Health Service (UHS) we have agreed the following when handling requests for monitoring and prescribing, taking into account the British Medical Association (BMA) guidance:

NHS work

The UHS will continue to provide services to patients under the care of NHS Lothian hospital teams in line with current shared care agreements and provide prescriptions if the prescribing meets the East Region Formulary guidance.

Private Providers

At the UHS we will not offer 'shared care' with private providers.

Prior to a referral, whether NHS or private, GPs will undertake the relevant pre-referral investigations as required for an NHS referral.

To ensure consistency and fairness, from 1st July 2024, if a patient is being seen by a private clinician the UHS will not be able to provide follow-up tests on the NHS, including blood tests, imaging or ECGs. These should be arranged privately.

Additionally any treatment that is recommended by a private provider will need to be arranged and funded privately, we will not be able to facilitate these at the University Health Service.

If ongoing care is requested on the NHS we will need to refer you to the relevant NHS service and this will be subject to standard NHS waiting times.

Caring for patients who are seeking overseas privately funded treatment or surgery

While NHS Scotland will always provide emergency care when necessary, all routine pre and post-operative care should be part of the package of care purchased by the individual patient.

There will be no obligation on the NHS to provide such routine pre and post-operative care.

In the event of a patient advising a healthcare professional of plans to travel overseas for privately arranged and purchased surgery, this is not recommended or supported by the UHS and there will be no obligation on the UHS to provide routine pre and post-operative care. All care required should be provided within the package of care sold by the overseas provider.