**Private/Non-NHS fees and charges**

**Why do fees/charges exist?**

The National Health Service provides most health care to most people free of charge but there are exceptions such as prescription charges and NHS dental fees. Contrary to belief GPs are not employed by the NHS. The NHS pays the practice for specific NHS work such as patient care but for non-NHS work the fee must cover the doctor’s costs. The NHS does not provide medical reports for insurance companies, claims on private health insurance and other letters and forms which require the doctor to review the patient’s medical records. As GP partners in the practice are self-employed, their costs – staff, buildings, heating, lighting, printing, paper etc. – must be covered in the same way as any small business.

Here are some examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge - private medical insurance reports, HGV licences and DVLA forms , Holiday cancellation forms , Letters requested by, or on behalf, of a patient

Please note that GPs with few exceptions are not obliged to take on any non-NHS work on behalf of their patients. At the surgery we will always attempt to assist as much as possible but not to the detriment of the usual NHS care.

**You may not need a report/letter or signature from a GP.**

Not all documents need a signature by a doctor, for example passport applications. You can ask another person in a position of trust to sign such documents free of charge. Read the information that comes with these types of forms carefully before requesting your GP to complete them.

Sometimes a summary of your records is all that is required for evidence of your medical conditions. With the **NHS APP** now providing access to comprehensive records, the information is likely readily available to most patients already. This now includes recent consultations and letters from secondary care providers. Otherwise, the practice may be able to provide a summary for you.

**What about forms that only require a signature, why are these charged?**

There is no such thing as a quick signature when doctors are required to sign forms supporting a claim by a patient.

When a doctor signs a certificate or completes a report, they must take time to review the patient’s records first. Some forms, such as an initial gun licence, require the GP to review the medical records from birth to present day. There is a legal duty to be truthful when signing forms and in making reports about patients. As such each doctor pays a three to four figure sum for indemnity (insurance for compensation of loss or damages) each year, a significant proportion of which is solely to cover the completion of these non-NHS documents. Carelessness or an inaccurate report can have serious consequences for the doctor with the General Medical Council or even the Police.

**What are the charges?**

Please see our list of private fees and charges.

Please note the list includes non-NHS work that may require additional investigations and appointments with clinicians.

**How long does it take to complete a report/form?**

Please allow up to 28 days for the work to be completed. The practice has a substantial volume of non-NHS work to complete weekly and it is all done in addition to the NHS work and hours. This may mean the GPs are doing work in their own time. As stated before NHS work will always take priority. An additional charge may be levied for more urgent requests.

**Going ahead with a private request**

All requests for private work need to be submitted in writing. If you are requesting completion of a form, please supply the form and all other relevant paperwork/information. Ensure you have enclosed all relevant paperwork and information with your request, and completed in full any parts of the form you are required to complete as the patient. Missing information may mean the GP is unable to complete the request and this may lengthen the process.

Your request is received and processed by our administration team. The request is documented, and the paperwork is then prepared for distribution to the GP.

The GP sets, alters, or confirms the fee payable for completion of the work. We will contact you to confirm this. If you are required to pay prior to completion of the work, you will be notified of this.

Once the fee has been confirmed with you, the paperwork is given back to the GP for completion. If any appointments or investigations are necessary, these are arranged as part of the process.

Once completed, the GP returns the paperwork to the administration team. The team file a copy to your medical records, complete any further action necessary, and notify you that the paperwork is ready, and of any fees to be settled.

You are welcome to call our administration team for an update on your request and we will do our best to advise you.