

Non-NHS Work and Fees

Introduction

Most services provided by the practice are covered under the normal NHS terms and conditions and are therefore provided free of charge to you.

However, some services provided by the practice are not covered under the normal NHS terms and conditions and are therefore provided by the surgery on a private basis. As this service is provided on a private basis the BMA advises that a charge is levied and our fees are in accordance with the BMA's own advised rates for the service.

There are occasions when services may not wholly be covered by the NHS and therefore you will be charged for the element that is deemed to be private. Patients (or their carer / representatives) will be informed when services being proposed are being offered on a private basis.

The Surgery provides a number of services that are not covered by our NHS contract. For example:

- accident or sickness certificates for insurance purposes
- school fee and holiday insurance certificates
- reports for health clubs to certify that patients are fit to exercise
- some travel vaccinations

Because these are not covered by the NHS, we charge a fee to cover the considerable costs of running a surgery, including staff costs, medical consumables, office expenses and overheads. If we do not charge fees, we are effectively putting more pressure on our already strained day to day NHS practice.

Charging structure

Rates are set for the following categories of work.

- **Simple letters and signatures.** This rate is applied to items taking 10 minutes or less of GP time and without any patient examination. In gauging the time, we include consultation time if the matter takes consultation time that would otherwise not have been needed.
- **Medical forms.** This rate is applied to items taking up to 20 minutes of GP time, and requiring a GP to review and summarise medical information and values from the record, but not requiring full medical examination.

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. In order to complete even the simplest of forms, therefore, the doctor might have to check the patient's entire medical record. Hence, even where a form is prefilled by the patient and the GP "only has to sign," this rate will be applied.

- **Medical examinations.** This is a per hour rate, and should be applied to medical examinations, including HGV, employment medicals etc. The hourly rate covers time with all clinicians.

- **Travel Clinic and Private Medication**

A limited number of travel vaccines are provided on the NHS for public health reasons.

This includes typhoid and hepatitis A. Travel vaccines not provided anywhere under the NHS for public health reasons, are privately provided by the practice in travel clinics. Anti-malarials are also provided privately by the practice in travel clinics.

Prices for travel vaccines and anti-malarials are set to be comparable to average prices charged by private travel clinics, including an allowance for the fact that private travel clinics sometimes charge a consultation fee, which we do not.

We sometimes provide private medication – e.g. Tadalafil, Levitra. Prices for these are also set based on the average market price.

Services we do not provide

There are a some services that we have taken the decision not to provide. These are:

- Passport signatures
- Sick notes for the first seven calendar days of a patient's sickness absence. (Patients can self-certify for this period.) This includes letters to schools within the first seven days of a patients sickness.
- letters of character/personal references for work/employment/education purposes

Time to complete forms

Time spent completing forms and preparing reports takes the GP away from the medical care of his or her patients. In addition, forms should be completed by the GP who best knows the patient, and that GP may be booked up for a couple of weeks ahead. We therefore are unable to commit to fast turnarounds for medical forms and letters. 7-10 working days is typical.

Urgent requests may mean that a doctor has to make special arrangements to process the form quickly, and this will cost more.

Payment Terms

Payment must be made at the point of request. We accept payment by cash only.

The exception to this is where insurance reports are sent directly to the insurer, who will then pay according to their usual terms.

Waiving and reducing fees

We often have requests to waive and/or reduce fees. We are sympathetic to our patients, particularly if they are on benefits or otherwise struggling. However, we have to be fair and open, and mindful that, if we do not charge fees, we are effectively putting more pressure on our day to day NHS practice.

Please ask at reception for any further information or questions that you may have about these services and charges. They can also inform you of the current charges.

If you wish to have the services in writing please let us know as a ' private fees statement ' of costs ' can be prepared for you.

You are under no pressure to agree to any private treatments being proposed.