

Policy Name	Policy on Private Letters for Patients
Policy Number	052
Version	1.1
Author	
Date Issued	24 December 2024
Review Date	24 December 2025
Reviewed By	Anshumen Bhagat

Authorisation by responsible manager	
Name	Dr Anshumen BHAGAT
Job Title	Partner & Clinical Director
Date	24 December 2024

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure for requesting, processing, and issuing private letters for patients, including the payment terms and conditions.

Scope

This policy applies to all private letters requested by patients that fall outside the scope of NHS-funded services.

1. Request Process

- 1.1. Patients requesting a private letter must complete a request form detailing the required information and purpose of the letter.
- 1.2. Requests will be reviewed to ensure that the surgery is able to provide the letter as per its professional remit.

2. Payment Terms

- 2.1. The surgery operates on a pre-payment system for all private letters.
- 2.2. Payment must be made in full before the letter is drafted or processed.
- 2.3. Accepted payment methods is cash.

3. Refund and Amendments Policy

3.1. Once payment has been received, the letter will be drafted and issued based on the information provided at the time of request.

3.2. **Refunds will not be issued** once the letter has been completed, regardless of whether the patient decides not to use the letter.

3.3. **Amendments to the letter will not be possible** after it has been finalized and issued. Patients are advised to thoroughly review the information provided to the surgery before submission.

4. Turnaround Time

4.1. The surgery aims to process and issue private letters within 15 working days from the date of payment.

4.2. Urgent requests may be accommodated at the discretion of the surgery and may incur an additional fee.

5. Acknowledgement

5.1. Patients will be required to sign an acknowledgment form confirming their understanding of this policy, including the payment terms, no-refund clause, and amendment restrictions.

6. Complaints and Queries

6.1. Any concerns regarding private letters should be directed to Dr Anshumen Bhagat – Partner/Clinical Director.

6.2. The surgery will address complaints in line with its standard complaints' procedure.

Application for Private Letters for Patients – Acknowledgement Form

Please complete this form and hand it to reception with any documentation which you may require completing. Please note that letters and requests can take up to 15 working days.

If you are requesting a letter for a list of medication for travelling abroad please ensure you provide the flight details, date of travel and your destination, failure to provide this information could lead to a delay.

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Request Date: _____

Details of Request: _____

(attached extra paper if needed)

Who is the letter to be addressed to: _____

If you are making a claim with your insurance company for cancellation of a holiday due to ill health, please could you provide the following information, failure to provide this information could delay completion of the form.

Date of Holiday: _____

Date Insurance Taken Out: _____

Patient's Signature: _____

Third Party Name & Signature: _____

Non-NHS fees

Take effect from August 2024

Contents

- Why do GPs sometimes charge fees?
- Where do fees come from?
- Why can it take a long time to get a form completed?
- I only need the doctor's signature – why do I need to wait?
- What is going to be the charge?
- How can I keep costs down?

Why do GPs sometimes charge fees?

The NHS provides health care free of charge, but there are exceptions: prescription charges have existed since 1951, and there are a few other services for which fees are charged, for example, medical reports for insurance companies.

It is important to understand that GPs are self-employed and offer their services to the NHS, and they must 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 must cover the doctor's costs.

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

- Accident/sickness insurance certificates.
- Certain travel vaccinations
- Private medical insurance reports.

Examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge other institutions include:

- Medical reports for an insurance company.
- Some reports for the DSS/Benefits Agency.
- Examinations of local authority employees
- Reports regarding joining the Army.

Where do fees come from?

The British Medical Association (BMA) suggests fees for non-NHS work which is not covered under a GP's NHS contract, to help GPs set their own professional fees. However, these fees are guidelines only, not recommendations, and a doctor is not obliged to charge the rates suggested. Fees are paid in advance of the work and is non-refundable if the work is done.

Why can it take a long time to get a form completed?

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 NHS workload, and this paperwork is done at times set aside for it.

I only need the doctor's signature –

why do I need to wait? 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. Carelessness or an inaccurate report can have serious consequences for the doctor.

What is going to be the charge?

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 doctor's use.

How can I keep costs down?

- Not all documents need 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.
- If you have several forms requiring completion, present them all at once and ask your GP if he or she is prepared to complete them all at once as a 'job lot' at a reduced price.
- Plan in advance. Do not expect your GP to process forms overnight. You should expect the form(s) to take up to 4 weeks to be processed.

Service	Paid By	Amount
Access to Medical Record under the Data Protect Act 1998	No fee	£0.00
Adoption medical	Patient/Council	£295.00
DNA Paternity Test (Blood test using supplied kit)	Patient	£175.00
Fitness to Fly Certificate – F2F appointment	Patient	£95.00
Hepatitis B Vaccination/Certificate	Patient	£125.00
HGV Medical	Patient	£130.00
Holiday Cancellation Certificate	Patient	£95.00
Letter to confirm health for Court Proceedings	Solicitors	From £125.00
Letter for Solicitor	Patient	From £195.00
Letter to take medication abroad	Patient	£95.00
Ofsted form	Patient	£175.00
Passport /Driving Licence Counter signature	Patient	£95.00
PCV Medical	Patient	£130.00

Police Medical	Patient	£195.00
Private Consultation	Patient	From £90.00
Private Medical Certificate	Patient	£45.00
Private Medical Insurance claim form (Simple form)	Patient	From £95.00
Private Medical Insurance claim form Complex form/report)	Patient	From £140.00
Private Prescription	Patient	£45.00
Taxi Drive/Other Occupational Driving Medical	Patient	£130.00
To Whom It May Concern	Patient	From £125.00
Shot Gun Medical	Patient	£175.00
Standard Letter (depending on length)	Patient	From £125.00
University Immunisation Certificate	Patient	From £95.00
Vaccination Certificate	Patient	£95.00