

Cressex Health Centre

Private Fees Policy

Charges for non NHS work

The government's contract with GP's covers medical services to NHS patients. However, in recent years more and more organisations have been involving doctors in a wide range of non NHS work. This work is not funded by the government, so GP practices have to find additional time to complete this work and consequently must charge a fee to cover their time and other administration expenses.

Delays in processing reports & GP signatures for reports and medicals

Please be aware that time spent completing forms and writing medical reports can take a considerable amount of time - Time that the GP could be providing direct medical care to patients. Despite an ever-increasing administration workload of forms/reports to complete we do our best to ensure that paperwork is turned around within the specified timeframe however, unexpected delays such as; patient records not arriving from the archive centre thus making the completion of the form impossible and / or urgent patient care that would naturally take priority.

When a GP signs a certificate, completes a report or writes a letter it is a condition of remaining on the medical register (which allows them to practice as a doctor), that they only sign what they know to be true. In order to complete even the simplest of forms, the doctor may have to check a patient's entire medical record.

Upfront fees

As a practice we have agreed that it is now necessary to ensure that all fees are paid in full at the time of booking an appointment. Far too often it is the case that patients are provided with a 30 minute appointment and then either cancelling at the last minute or simply not attending (Did NOT Attend - DNA)* You will agree and appreciate that this behaviour is completely unacceptable and unjustifiable as the time wasted would have been better spent caring directly for our patients.

It is evident that by ensuring patients pay for their private appointments upfront they are more likely to ensure that they attend their appointments. In the event that a patient still DNA's their appointment or they cancel with less than 48 hours' notice they will only be refunded 50% of the original fee.

You will always be given a receipt for money you have paid for the service. This can be helpful in recovering your costs from employers / Insurance Companies etc.

If you require more specific information regarding our fees and charges please refer to our tailored leaflet for basic private services/costs displayed at reception and available on our website.

Please note that this is not an extensive list. If you require a private service not listed please contact the team direct.

Private Fees (Non NHS work) – Information for patients and third parties

The Government's contract with GPs covers medical services to NHS patients, including the provision of ongoing medical treatment. In recent years, however, more and more organisations have been involving doctors in a whole range of non-medical work. Sometimes the only reason that GPs are asked is because they are in a position of trust in the community, or because an insurance company or employer wants to ensure that information provided to them is true and accurate.

The BMA (British Medical Association) suggest fees for non-NHS work which is not covered under GP's NHS contract, to help GPs set their own professional fees. However, the fees are guidelines only, not recommendations, and a doctor is not obliged to charge the rates suggested. The BMA recommends that GPs tell patients and third parties in advance if they will be charged, and how much. It is up the individual doctor to decide how much to charge.

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

With certain limited exceptions for example, a GP confirming that one of their patients is not fit for jury service, GPs **do not** have to carry out non-NHS work on behalf of their patients.

Whilst GPs will always attempt to assist their patients with the completion of forms for example for insurance purposes, they are not required to do such non-NHS work.

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

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 workload and paperwork takes up an increasing amount of their time, so many GPs find they have to complete this work outside of and in addition to their normal hours.

I only need the doctor's signature – what is the problem?

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 with the General Medical Council (the doctors' regulatory body) or even the police.

We reserve the right to suspend, extend processing times for private/Non NHS work at any time due to busy periods.