

# Changes To Hospital Contracts 2017/18

**General Practice is at breaking point.**

**A large part of the burden has been due to hospitals dumping work inappropriately on GPs. This has finally been recognised by government and action is being taken. National negotiations have secured changes to the hospitals contract which should improve patient care as a result.**

**In Summary:**

Hospitals must liaise directly with patients should they miss an outpatient appointment rather than tell patients to see their GPs for another referral.

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Hospitals must make direct internal referrals to another department or doctor for a related medical problem rather than send the patient back to the GP for a new referral.

Hospitals must issue fit notes, covering the full period that the patient needs to recover.

Hospitals must respond to patient queries for matters relating to their care rather than asking the patient to contact their GP. So for test queries, results, treatment queries, admin, appointment delays or changes, please speak to the hospital.

**YOU SHOULD NO LONGER ACCEPT**

**“You need to see your GP”**

Hospitals must not ask GPs to prescribe specialist medications without an agreement, unless the GP feels competent to do so.

Hospitals must ensure clinic letters are received by the GP within 10 days of the patient's appointment from this year, and within 7 days from next year, so that GP appointments are not wasted when patients specifically see the GP to discuss a letter when no letter has been received.

Hospitals must issue medication following outpatient attendance at least sufficient to meet the patient's immediate clinical needs until their GP receives the recent clinical letter and can prescribe accordingly.

Results and treatments requested by the hospital doctors must be communicated by the hospitals directly to the patients.

**Remember, these changes are not recommendations but contractual requirements, and therefore if hospitals do not abide by these standards they are in breach of their contract.**

**Any patient experiencing difficulty with the hospital should contact**

**PALS on 01332 623751 or 0800 027 2128.**