Victoria Medical Centre

Private Fees – Questions & Answers

## Why GPs sometimes charge fees, surely the doctor is being paid anyway?

It is important to understand that many GPs are not employed by the NHS. They are self-employed and they have to cover their costs in the same way as any small business. The NHS covers these costs for NHS work, but for non-NHS work, the fees charged by GPs contribute towards their costs.

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

* 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.

**Do GPs have to do non-NHS work for 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 take some paperwork home at night and weekends.

We currently estimate that any form handed in for a GP to complete will take up to 6 weeks. We will of course take any deadlines into consideration but cannot promise completion by this date.

**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.

**What will I be charged?**

Please refer to our list of charges available in our waiting room, on our website and at reception. If you have any questions relating to these fees, please contact the surgery before requesting this service.

**Can I see my complete report before it is returned?**

If you have previous signed consent and requested to view your report before it is returned we will contact you to arrange this once the report is complete by the Doctor. If no prior agreement has been arranged and you would like to see your completed report before it is returned please contact us to arrange this.

**Why do I need to bring ID to collect my form?**

We now request that you bring identification with you to collect any forms or letters you have requested from the surgery, this is to prevent breach of confidentiality or information falling in to the wrong hands.

If you are unable to collect your own form we ask that whoever is collecting on your behalf brings their own ID and that you inform the surgery prior to their collection.