

# Non-NHS fees

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## 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	£75.00
Letter to confirm health for Court Proceedings	Solicitors	From £125.00
Letter for Solicitor	Patient	From £195.00
Letter to take medication abroad	Patient	£75.00
Ofsted form	Patient	£175.00
Passport /Driving Licence Counter signature	Patient	£75.00
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	£75.00
Private Medical Insurance claim form Complex form/report)	Patient	From £105.00
Private Prescription	Patient	£45.00
Taxi Drive/Other Occupational Driving Medical	Patient	£130.00
To Whom It May Concern	Patient	From £95.00
Shot Gun Medical	Patient	£175.00
Standard Letter (depending on length)	Patient	From £75.00
University Immunisation Certificate	Patient	From £75.00
Vaccination Certificate	Patient	£75.00