**Brook Lane Surgery - Fees and Charges**

**Private Charges in General Practice**

**FAQs**

**Why is there a charge for this letter/service?**

The NHS provides certain services which GPs offer and for which they are paid by the NHS. There are many things which patients request from GPs which are not covered by this. All of these things need to be paid for as nothing can be done for free.

**How long will it take?**

We aim to complete all forms within 4 weeks of payment and all letters within 2 weeks of payment.

**Why do private services take longer than NHS services?**

We generally prioritise NHS “jobs”. Most doctors are here for around 12+ hours a day doing their NHS work. Private work is done on top of that. We find time for it by staying even longer to do this work.

**I only need a quick letter. Why does it cost that much?**

Private services are entirely optional. We actually don’t *have* to offer any of them. We do so because we know that patients sometimes find the services valuable and we know that it can be hard to find another private provider. However we have to value our own time and that of our staff – so we set our costs accordingly.

**I need a taxi/HGV medical and I don’t have any medical conditions. Why does it cost the same for me as for someone with a complex history?**

We charge a standard fee for all taxi and HGV medicals. We are filling in the same legal documents regardless of your medical condition. Sometimes some patients do take longer than others but we take the view that this is the fairest way of doing this. There are other providers of medicals if you would rather go elsewhere.

**Why has my life insurance request taken so long?**

Some private requests come from insurance companies. They often offer an unacceptable amount of payment and negotiation has to take place before we will agree to complete the forms. This can take several weeks before they agree to pay an appropriate amount. This sometimes delays forms being completed. You are welcome to contact your insurance company if you are concerned about the delay.

**I really need this form urgently. Please can I have it urgently?**

Until now we have declined to do urgent private work. We will offer this from August 2017 – as there seems to be so much demand for it – but there will be a 25% surcharge for anything we are asked to do urgently. It maybe that we cannot provide this service on every occasion. It will depend on our NHS workload at the time we are asked. If we accept the work, it will be completed within 7 days.

**Why can’t I have this form? Or that letter? I’m prepared to pay for it.**

There are certain requests that we will not agree to. We will not provide “fit to….” letters for anyone doing any activity. This is because we are not insured to do this.

We will provide letters for airlines etc stating patients’ medical conditions/pregnancy stage etc but will not comment on fitness. We will do letters if requested for sporting events but will not comment on fitness, simply providing past medical history and current medical conditions. We would normally recommend – if people need more detail than this – that they contact a travel clinic or a private sports’ medicine specialist.

We will also not write letters stating that people are or are not fit to attend court or be part of jury service. The same rules as above apply.

We will not fill in forms for Power of Attorney or for capacity issues. These questions should be addressed to a private psychiatrist or a solicitor.

We also will not fill in forms for work which would be better dealt with by occupational health.

We are unable to countersign passport forms for UK passports as they require too much personal information about the person countersigning. We will consider signing other passport forms if they do not require this information and if we have known the applicant for more than 2 years.

If you have any queries about whether we will or will not fill out certain forms/write certain letters please speak to the receptionists who will pass on these queries to the doctor.

**I asked for this last year and I wasn’t charged for it. Why now?**

This was a mistake last year! We will not charge you in retrospect but we will charge now and in the future.

**Why do I have to pay for travel vaccinations?**

Some travel vaccinations are within NHS services and therefore free to you as the patient. Others are not and these will be charged for accordingly.

**I cannot afford to pay what you are asking.**

We are sorry but we do not offer a sliding scale of fees. We charge what these items are worth. As previously stated, none of these things *has* to be done through the GP. If you can find a cheaper service elsewhere you are welcome to use that service.

**Can you just give it to me now and I will bring the money in later?**

Sorry but all payment is required in advance in the form of cash or a cheque. If the receptionist is unclear whether the doctors can complete your request they will ask the doctors and get back to you. You will then have to come back and pay before the letter/form is completed.

**My employers want me to get this blood test or this letter. Can I have it on the NHS?**

Blood tests requested by employers should be offered through Occupational Health. Your employer should have access to an Occupational Health scheme. We will not do these blood tests on the NHS. We may be able to give you a form to attend the local private hospitals for these. We do not charge for the forms but the hospital will charge for the blood test. Your employer should pay this charge usually.

We are sometimes asked for letters from employers about a patient’s fitness. This is rarely appropriate from a GP and should come via Occupational Health. We will do a letter stating current condition and past medical conditions but we will not comment on fitness to do a particular job.

**I need copies of my notes for my solicitor.**

When a solicitor asks for copies of your notes, as long as we have your consent, we will provide them. *Please note*: solicitors are increasingly asking for copies of your notes rather than for a report. This is because there is a fixed (smaller) charge for copies of your notes. If you are happy for the solicitor to have copies of all your notes we will provide this. However please be aware that this can mean both sides of any dispute getting access to your notes and that *everything* you have ever mentioned to a doctor will be included. Many patients are unaware of this and are then embarrassed or upset when seemingly irrelevant facts are used by lawyers in a dispute. We would normally recommend refusing consent for your notes to be copied and asking the lawyer to request a targeted report instead.

If the notes are requested in full, you will either need to collect these and take them to the solicitors yourself or we will post them using a recorded delivery service. We will need to see signed consent from you.

**Private Charges**

From August 1st 2017

| Private sick note (less than 1 week) | £30 |
| --- | --- |
| Letter using the notes | £50 |
| Travel cancellation form | Simple £50 Complex £100 |
| Detailed report on proforma | Simple £65 Complex £100 |
| Written report for patient | £100 |
| Written report for solicitors | From £100 |
| Taxi/HGV Medical | £180 |
| Other medicals (inc adoption/fostering) | £140 |
| Life Insurance forms | £140 |
| Request for copy of computerised notes | £10 |
| Request for copy of paper+ notes | £50 |
| To whom it may concern letter | £30 |
| Private Prescription | £30 |

**Please note that there is a 25% surcharge for any urgent request we accept.**