

HESWALL & PENSBY GROUP PRACTICE

FIT NOTES AFTER HOSPITAL CARE

If you are likely to need a fit note (also known as a MED 3 or sick note) when you come out of hospital or following an outpatient attendance, please ask the doctor treating you in hospital to provide you with one before you leave. This sheet gives you some myths and facts about fit notes.

MYTH 1 – Consultants and junior doctors don't write fit notes. Fit notes are a GP's job. **NOT TRUE**

MYTH 2 – If you have attended outpatients, the hospital can't issue a fit note. **NOT TRUE**

MYTH 3 – The hospital can't send me a fit note by text or post. **NOT TRUE**

MYTH 4 – The hospital can only issue fit notes for short periods such as one or two weeks. **NOT TRUE**

MYTH 5 – Fit note pads are only supplied to GP surgeries. **NOT TRUE**

TRUTH 1 – Fit notes CAN be issued by NHS and Private doctors. **TRUE**

TRUTH 2 – It is a breach of contract if the hospital fails to provide a fit note. **TRUE**

TRUTH 3 – It is a statutory obligation of the doctor treating you to issue a fit note.

This includes all hospital doctors. **TRUE**

TRUTH 4 – The doctors treating you can sign you off for the appropriate time according to the condition you have been treated for. **TRUE**

The role of hospital doctors in issuing the Statement of Fitness for Work

The duty to provide a Med 3 rests with the doctor who at the time has clinical responsibility for the patient.

Hospital out-patients

For an out-patient this will generally be the hospital doctor... In cases where the patient's GP has not taken over responsibility for the incapacitating condition the treating clinician should issue any subsequent Statements for an appropriate forward period.

Hospital in-patients

Form MED 10 should continue to be issued to cover any period that the patient is in hospital. On discharge from hospital the doctor who has clinical responsibility for the patient should provide them, if appropriate, with a MED 3 to cover a forward period. This is to avoid unnecessary referrals to GPs solely for the purpose of sickness certification.

(This is an extract from the guidance from the Department of Work and Pensions about fit notes (also known as doctor's statements or MED 3s in this text)

Every year thousands of GP appointments are taken up by patients requesting fit notes that should have been issued by hospital doctors at the time of treatment. Please help us to utilise our GP appointments for patients with genuine clinical need by obtaining your fit note from your hospital clinician.

If you any problems obtaining a fit note from your hospital clinician, please contact PALS (Patient Liaison Service) team:

Tel: 0800 432 0251 Email: wuth.patientexperience@nhs.net