

What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a Consultant Privately?

This leaflet describes what you can expect to happen if you ask your GP to refer you to see a specialist doctor privately.

What happens next?

Your GP will write a referral letter if they think it is appropriate and send it to the Consultant that you have both agreed to, this will include any relevant medical details about you. [If an insurance company wishes for a specific form to be completed you will be charged for this additional work].

You should contact the Consultants team directly to organise an appointment. Should there be any appointment issues in the future, you should contact them directly.

Seeing the Consultant:

What happens if I need a test or procedure?

If the Consultant thinks that you need any tests (including blood tests), or a surgical procedure, the Consultant is responsible for:

- arranging the test and any medications that might be needed for this as well as explaining how and when you will receive a date and what to do if the date is not suitable for you;
- giving you the results and explaining what they mean (this may be done in a separate appointment with the Consultant or by letter).

You should not visit your GP surgery to discuss the results of tests organised by others, it is the Consultants responsibility to discuss this with you.

What happens if I need new medicines?

The Consultant might suggest prescribing new medicines for you or might want to make changes to the medicines that you are already taking.

The Consultant is responsible for:

Giving you the first prescription for any new medicine that you need to start taking straightaway.

In some cases, your GP may be able to continue to prescribe these medications. The GP will need to see a full clinic letter from the consultant outlining the reasons for treatment before deciding whether this might be appropriate. Wait at least seven days to allow this letter to arrive before contacting your GP. If a prescription is needed sooner than this you should contact the Consultants team for them to prescribe (usually by their secretary).

Private consultants may suggest medications to patients which wouldn't normally be prescribed by NHS GPs. If this is the case, you will need to continue to receive them from the Consultant, please contact them directly to organise this.

What happens if I need to transfer my care back to the NHS?

If after seeing the Consultant privately you want to be back under NHS care, regulations allow for you to transfer back. This transfer needs to be done by the private Consultant who is overseeing your care and you should not be passed back to the GP for this to be done. There are a few reasons why;

- it delays your care
- your Consultant knows the full details of your condition and where best to refer you to
- it wastes precious NHS appointments with your GP

What if I need a Fit Note (previously known as Sick Note)?

If you need to be certified as unfit for work following treatment by a Consultant:

- the Consultant is responsible for issuing you with a Fit Note, this includes after operations.
- the Fit Note should cover the period they expect you to be unfit to work, or until your next contact with the Consultant. You should not need to see your GP to get a Fit Note following hospital treatment unless your inability to work is unexpectedly prolonged.

What if I need a follow-up appointment?

The Consultant will discuss with you whether you should attend hospital for ongoing follow-up care or whether you should be discharged back to your GP. If the Consultant thinks you do need to be seen again, the hospital will give you another appointment or tell you when to expect this. If you do not hear anything, please contact the Consultant's office, rather than your GP surgery.

What do I do if I have any questions?

If you have any specific questions related to your care, you should **contact the Consultants team** directly, it is important that you make sure you know how you can contact your Consultant's office. Thousands of appointments are wasted with NHS GPs discussing issues that should be dealt with by Consultants.

This leaflet has been developed using information from the BMA as well as NHS information from General Practice.

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