**Why fees are charged for some services**

NHS services are provided free of charge to our patients under our General Medical Services contract and the NHS covers the cost of providing these services. However, some additional services are not available under the NHS and are not paid for by NHS funding.  GPs are self-employed and have to cover the costs of running the GP Practice just like any other business. For example, they need to pay staff, heating and lighting costs and also invest in developing the services and facilities provided.  Time spent by GPs completing private reports and undertaking private medical examinations are generally done outside of normal contracted working hours as an extra commitment to a GPs workload.  The fees charged for non-NHS services go towards covering the costs of running and investing in our Practice to provide the wide range of services patients require.

**What type of service is non-NHS and who pays the fees**

Some services for which a non-NHS fee is applicable will be payable by patients themselves and some services will be payable by other organisations, e.g. insurance companies, local authorities, and solicitors, etc.  (Where information is requested from third parties, this will of course not be released without prior consent by the patient).  A full list of all fees and charges is included below but some examples would be:

Services for which a fee is payable by patients are:

* employment, HGV, and taxi driver medical examinations
* accident and sickness certificates for insurance purposes
* school fee and holiday insurance certificates
* reports for health clubs to certify patients are fit to exercise

Services for which a fee is payable by other authorities are:

* copies of medical records for solicitors and insurance companies
* life assurance and income protection reports for insurance companies
* reports for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
* medical reports for local authorities in connection with adoption and fostering

Patients should note that **not** all documents need the signature of a doctor, for example passport applications, where you can ask another person in a position of trust to sign such documents free of charge.  Similarly, not all forms need to be completed by a doctor, for example Bus Pass and Blue Badge forms – these can be completed and submitted by patients themselves and only if the application was refused might the patient want to ask the doctor to provide additional information to support their application.

**How long it takes for private non-NHS forms etc to be completed**

A doctor’s priority will always be the care provided for patients under the NHS. Time spent completing forms and preparing reports adds to their already heavy workload and non-NHS work is generally done in the doctors’ own time.  The patient may feel that they only require a doctor’s signature on a form which should not take long, but a condition of remaining on the Medical Register is that a doctor only signs what they know to be true.  They therefore may need to check the patient’s entire medical record to avoid serious consequences for the doctor with the General Medical Council (GMC).  The waiting time for non-NHS work and services completed outside normal working hours is therefore likely to be affected by this.

Patients are advised that any documentation to be completed by a doctor may, in general, take approximately 5 - 7 working days (dependent upon the availability of the doctor concerned and any factors such as annual leave, sickness, etc)

**How fees are determined**

Our fees and charges are set in accordance with British Medical Association (BMA) guidance and in line with charges applied by other General Practice surgeries.

The British Medical Association (BMA) provides guidance on a range of fees, including the fee for medical insurance reports which it has agreed with the Association of British Insurers (ABI) and DVLA fees which it has agreed with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).  Their suggested fees are for guidance only, and are not recommendations, and doctors are not obliged to charge the rates which they suggest.  Our list of charges reflects the **BMA** suggested fees for some services while for most other services, our fees are lower than the **BMA** recommended fees. It is at the discretion of individual doctors whether, under certain circumstances, they agree to waive a payable fee.

**What are the fees for non-NHS services**

**For our full list of fees and charges click on the link below.**

**Non-NHS Fees and Charges**

Payment for services can be made by cash or cheque only (made payable to Grove House Surgery) and a receipt will be provided.  If a service you require is not on our list please enquire at Reception and we will look into whether this can be provided and what the fee would be.  Our list of fees will be reviewed and updated annually.