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## FIT NOTES AFTER HOSPITAL CARE

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

**“Consultants and juniors don’t write fit notes. It’s a GP’s job” – FALSE**

**“The hospital just don’t have any fit note pads” – FALSE**

**“The hospital can only issue notes for one or two weeks at the very most” – FALSE**

**“The hospital can’t issue you with a fit note if you’ve only been to outpatients” – FALSE**

**“The doctor who is treating you at the time has a statutory obligation to provide you with a fit note if you need one. This includes all hospital doctors” – TRUE**

**“The doctor who is treating you should sign you off for the appropriate time period according to the condition you have been treated for” – TRUE**

**“Both private and NHS doctors can issue fit notes” – TRUE**

This is an extract from the guidance from the Department of Work and Pensions about fit notes (also known as doctors’ statements or Med 3s in this text):

### ***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 a 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.*

Thousands of appointments and telephone calls with GPs are taken up each year by patients requesting fit notes when they could have actually been issued by hospital doctors providing treatment at the time. Please help us to keep our appointments free for patients who have genuine clinical need, rather than for administrative paperwork that could have easily been dealt with by others at the end of your hospital stay.