

# Student Sickness and Medical Certification

Sheffield  
LMC



## GUIDANCE FOR SHEFFIELD GPs

July 2019

Following a number of concerns raised by Sheffield GPs about the increasing work generated by students or Universities requesting medical certificates or letters of support, the LMC Executive met with representatives from both student practices and the Universities.

The following information was noted during the meeting:

- University Health Service provides this service to their students free of charge.
- Porter Brook Medical Centre provides study-related reports free of charge.
- Both Universities do as much as they can to encourage students to register with them.
- The growing student population undoubtedly means that registrations will occur in other practices around the city.
- Sheffield Hallam University has a contract with Porter Brook Medical Centre to provide payments for services including medical reports, but this does not include a contract to pay other practices.
- It is the LMC's view that provision of medical certificates or letters of support for students is not contractual NHS work and, therefore, GPs are entitled to decline to provide a report. If a GP does provide a report they are entitled to charge the same fee as they would charge any other patient at the practice who requested a non-contractual report or letter.
- Although the Universities did state that they would accept fit notes, the LMC has clarified this situation with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The DWP have confirmed that fit notes should be issued for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and benefit purposes only. They are not intended for evidence of student illness or the impact of the illness on studies, and it would be inappropriate for fit notes to be used in this way.