



REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF BENEFIT CLAIMS AND APPEALS

Guidance for Sheffield GPs

GPs, as certified medical practitioners, have a statutory obligation to provide statements of incapacity to patients on their list (Fit Notes/Med3) and certain information to a healthcare professional working for the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments (CHDA) on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) when requested (ESA113/FRR2). However, under their NHS contract there is no requirement for GPs to provide reports or offer an opinion on incapacity for work to anyone else, including the patient, unless requested to do so by Jobcentre Plus.

The LMC has received assurances from the DWP that patients are not asked to request information directly from their GP. If Jobcentre Plus or the CHDA considers that further medical evidence is necessary, they will seek it. They will be responsible for paying any fee to the doctor for providing the report.

When refusing to provide the information directly to the patient, the practice should inform the patient that mechanisms are in place for relevant information to be requested from GPs by a number of organisations involved in the process. If the patient thinks that further medical evidence is necessary to support their claim or appeal, they should contact Jobcentre Plus or the CHDA, clearly stating their reasons for believing that further evidence is necessary.

GPs are under no obligation to provide reports to personnel such as Citizens Advice staff to support claims or appeals, or to provide it free of charge. The LMC has made it clear to representatives of advice centres that they should not involve GPs in this process.

When refusing to provide information practices would be advised to make it clear that the refusal to provide medical evidence should not be taken as having any bearing on the case in question.

Further information about the CHDA, their role in the benefit claim and appeals processes and a Q&A section for GPs can be found at www.chdauk.co.uk.