Private Fees

Date of last Review: 3rd January 2012
Date of next review: December 2012
For action by:

All staff

Further details and Additional Copies from:

Practice Manager
Patient Services Manager

Responsibility for dissemination to new staff:

Patient Services Manager
Secretaries

Amendments Summary:

<table>
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<th>Issued</th>
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Schedule of Review

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<th>Date of Review</th>
<th>Reviewed by</th>
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<tr>
<td>12th December 2011</td>
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<td>December 2012</td>
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Policy Written By

Practice Manager
Introduction

1. The NHS provides most health care free of charge. However there are a number of other services for which fees can be charged. These are mainly for services not covered by the NHS, such as medical reports for insurance companies, some travel vaccinations and some medical certificates. An indication of the charges that will be raised are at Appendix 1. This list is comprehensive and based upon a range of services that the practice offers, however the practice reserves the right to charge a fee for any services which are not provided free of charge within our NHS contract or for patients not entitled to NHS care.

2. Doctors are involved in a whole range of non-medical work, largely on the basis that they occupy a position of trust within the community, and are in the position to verify the accuracy of information. If a GP signs a certificate or completes a report, it is a professional duty that s(he) checks the accuracy of such information. This may involve examining the patient's entire medical record.

3. A range of questions which patients may raise is attached at Appendix 2 with answers which have been determined with the British Medical Association.
Non NHS services for which a fee will be charged

Not all services provided at Crown Heights Medical Centre are available under the NHS and therefore these services will attract a charge. The schedule below illustrates the charges that you will be asked to pay.

Method of payment

Cash or Cheque payable in advance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Charge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driving Licence signature</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVLA fitness to drive form completion</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVLA fitness to drive medical</td>
<td>60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident/Sickness Certificate</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Health Insurance Claim</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Insurance Claim</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningitis (1)</td>
<td>45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Encephalitis (2)</td>
<td>160.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies (3)</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis (3)</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Fever (1)</td>
<td>55.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>HGV, PSV, Taxi</td>
<td>105.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers Examination &amp; Report</td>
<td>140.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVLA Medical</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Report with no examination</td>
<td>70.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Report with examination</td>
<td>110.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to records</td>
<td>10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopy charge per sheet</td>
<td>0.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitness to travel certificate</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Vaccination certificate</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom from Infection certificate</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passport signature</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Consultation for Overseas Visitors</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Prescription</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sick Note</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Items</td>
<td>Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shotgun Licence</td>
<td>45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power of Attorney</td>
<td>45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Certificate for Gym, Dancing, Diet Clubs, Modelling</td>
<td>45.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The practice reserves the right to raise charges for any other services it delivers in addition to those outlined above such as charges for domiciliary visits which will be determined by the time taken to travel to and return from the place of domicile, plus mileage @£0.60p per mile combined with the cost of the service delivered. A minimum charge of £40.00 will be applied, although the sum may be higher at the discretion of the practice.

Should any laboratory tests be required as part of the consultations/examinations outlined above these will be subject to a separate charge and details of the costs likely to be incurred should be determined with the practice before the tests are undertaken.
Questions that patients may ask

Isn’t the NHS supposed to be free?

The National Health Service provides most health care to most people free of charge, but there are exceptions: prescription charges have existed since 1951 and there are a number of other services for which fees are charged. Sometimes the charge is made to cover some of the cost of treatment, for example, dental fees; in other cases, it is because the service is not covered by the NHS, for example, providing copies of health records or producing medical reports for insurance companies.

Surely the doctor is being paid anyway?

It is important to understand that many GPs are not employed by the NHS; they are self-employed and they have to cover their costs - staff, buildings, heating, lighting, etc - in the same way as any small business. The NHS covers these costs for NHS work, but for non-NHS work, the fees charged by GPs contribute towards their costs.

What is covered by the NHS and what is not?

The Government’s contract with GPs covers medical services to NHS patients, including the provision of ongoing medical treatment. In recent years, however, more and more organisations have been involving doctors in a whole range of non-medical work. Sometimes the only reason that GPs are asked is because they are in a position of trust in the community, or because an insurance company or employer wants to ensure that information provided to them is true and accurate.

Examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge their own NHS patients are:

- accident/sickness certificates for insurance purposes
- school fee and holiday insurance certificates
- reports for health clubs to certify that patients are fit to exercise

Examples of non-NHS services for which GPs can charge other institutions are:

- life assurance and income protection reports for insurance companies
- reports for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in connection with disability living allowance and attendance allowance
- medical reports for local authorities in connection with adoption and fostering

Do GPs have to do non-NHS work for their patients?

With certain limited exceptions, for example a GP confirming that one of their patients is not fit for jury service, GPs do not have to carry out non-NHS work on behalf of their patients. Whilst GPs will always attempt to assist their patients with the completion of forms, for example for insurance purposes, they are not required to do such non-NHS work.

Is it true that the BMA sets fees for non-NHS work?

The BMA suggests fees that GPs may charge their patients for non-NHS work (ie work not covered under their contract with the NHS) in order to help GPs set their fees.
own professional fees. However, the fees suggested by the BMA are intended for
guidance only; they are not recommendations and a doctor is not obliged to charge
the rates we suggest. **GP fees suggested by the BMA.**

**Can a fee be charged by a GP for the completion of cremation forms?**

A deceased person cannot be cremated until the cause of death is definitely known
and properly recorded. Before cremation can take place two certificates need to be
signed, one by the GP and one by another doctor. Cremation form 4 must be
completed by the ‘registered medical practitioner who attended the deceased during
their last illness’. Form 5 must be completed by a ‘registered medical practitioner who
is neither a partner nor a relative of the doctor who completed form 4’.

A fee can be charged for the completion of both forms 4 and 5 as this does not form
part of a doctor’s NHS duties (1). Doctors normally charge these fees to the funeral
director, who, generally passes on the cost to the family. Doctors are also entitled to
charge a mileage allowance, where appropriate.

**Can VAT be charged by GPs for some non-NHS services?**

Since 1 May 2007, certain medical services have become subject to Value Added
Tax (VAT). This follows a European Court of Justice Ruling in 2003, and subsequent
changes to VAT rules introduced by HM Revenue & Customs.

The original Court ruling made it clear that, where the main purpose of a medical
service is the 'protection, maintenance or restoration of the health of an individual’
then that service **should continue to be exempt from VAT.** All heathcare provided
either through the NHS, or the private sector, is therefore not subject to VAT.

However, where the purpose of a medical service is not, primarily, the treatment of a
patient (for example, the completion of medical insurance reports by a doctor), the
Court ruled that this service should be subject to VAT. Such GP reports have been
subject to VAT since 1 May 2007. In the UK this applies where a medical
practitioner’s income exceeds the VAT registration threshold.

**Why does it sometimes take my GP a long time to complete my form?**

Time spent completing forms and preparing reports takes the GP away from the
medical care of his or her patients. Most GPs have a very heavy workload and
paperwork takes up an increasing amount of their time, so many GPs find they have
to take some paperwork home at night and weekends.

**I only need the doctor’s signature - what is the problem?**

When a doctor signs a certificate or completes a report, it is a condition of remaining
on the Medical Register that they only sign what they know to be true. In order to
complete even the simplest of forms, therefore, the doctor might have to check the
patient’s entire medical record. Carelessness or an inaccurate report can have
serious consequences for the doctor with the General Medical Council (the doctors’
regulatory body) or even the Police.

**What will I be charged?**

The BMA recommends that GPs tell patients in advance if they will be charged, and
what the fee will be. It is up to individual doctors to decide how much they will charge,
but the BMA produces lists of suggested fees which many doctors use. A scale of fees appropriate to a range of services provided by Crown Heights Medical Centre is attached at Appendix 1.

**What can I do to help?**

- Not all documents need a signature by a doctor, for example passport applications. You can ask another person in a position of trust to sign such documents free of charge.
- If you have several forms requiring completion, present them all at once and ask your GP if he or she is prepared to complete them at the same time to speed up the process.
- Do not expect your GP to process forms overnight: urgent requests may mean that a doctor has to make special arrangements to process the form quickly, and this will cost more.

**What report work doesn’t have to be done by my GP?**

There is some medical examination and report work that can be done by any doctor, not only a patient’s GP. For this work there are no set or recommended fees.