

GLENNAVY FAMILY PRACTICE

March 2020

COVID 19 Coronavirus – Request for MED3 Fit Notes or GP Letters

In light of the current Coronavirus situation, we have provided this letter as a standard response for all patients or employers who might request Med3 Fit Note or “Sick Note” for periods of absence due to Covid19 Coronavirus.

Government advice for employees is as follows:

*By law, medical evidence is not required for the first 7 days of sickness (employees can self-certify) Self certification can be by e-mail to your employer or by completing SC2 form - download here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-sick-pay-employees-statement-of-sickness-sc2>). After 7 days, it is for the employer to determine what evidence they require, if any, from the employee. To make it easier for people to provide evidence to their employer that they need to stay at home, we are developing an alternative form of evidence to the fit note. These will shortly be available through **NHS 111 online**.*

In the meantime, we continue to urge employers to respect the need to stay at home where they are following government advice to do so and to show flexibility in the evidence they require from employees.

From: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

Further information for employers is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

Some employees may be required to isolate themselves due to another member of the household being symptomatic, or through being high risk. In these cases, your GP will not be able to issue a Med3 as the time off work is not due to an illness, and isn't affecting your ability to work, but rather is a precaution to avoid transmission of any illness that is yet to produce symptoms. Once again, the government expect employers to be sympathetic in these circumstances.

Whilst we appreciate this may cause difficulties between employees and employers, GPs have a responsibility to prioritise the assessment and management of the healthcare needs of patients who are acutely unwell, rather than spending time dealing with requests for sick notes, particularly when they aren't in a position to issue one.

GPs may issue Med3s for patients who are advised to not work where the reason is NOT related to Covid19; however this will be assessed on a case by case basis in line with current demand.

This letter applies to all patients registered with the Glenavy Family Practice.