

Part 11: Templates for practice use

The following template letters have been drawn up to help practices manage workload, and should be adapted for local use as appropriate.

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Appendix 1

Template response to secondary care work transfer

Patient details:

Dear X

I refer to your request for this practice to undertake (insert work requested). I enclose a copy of your request (optional).

I am sorry that we are unable undertake this work for the following reason (s):

(Use as appropriate)

- The task(s) is not an essential service as per our GMS/PMS contract
- This work has not been commissioned by our CCG
- This work has not been funded as a national or local enhanced service
- This work is more appropriately provided by yourself as a specialist

You will be aware of the current pressures on general practice, and we unable to undertake unresourced or inappropriate work that is outside our contractual responsibility, and which will as a result jeopardise our core duty of care to patients.

We have informed the patient that this work is not the responsibility of the practice and would be grateful if you would contact them directly to provide the service.

Thank you for your understanding.

Appendix 2

Template response to inappropriate prescribing requests

Patient details:

Dear X

You recently wrote asking us to prescribe the following medication for the above patient. A copy of your request is attached.

We are sorry that in line with our GMC duty of care to patients, we are unable to prescribe this medication because:

(Use as appropriate)

- We do not feel competent and skilled to prescribe this specialist drug. This should be prescribed by a specialist who can take clinical responsibility for this prescription.
- The initiation of this drug should be done by a specialist, and the patient stabilised on the medication before being considered suitable for a GP to prescribe
- The request is for unlicensed use of this drug, and which should therefore be prescribed by a specialist able to take appropriate clinical responsibility

(For shared care requests)

- We are unable to take on this request for shared care, since we do not feel we have the necessary expertise and skills to take clinical responsibility for the prescribing and monitoring of this specialist medication.
- We are unable to prescribe this medication under shared care arrangements, since the prescribing of this medication has not been commissioned as a shared care enhanced service from this GP practice

We would be grateful if you would arrange for the patient to receive this medication via the hospital pharmacy or ideally via a hospital FPIOHP. The patient could then use the latter to collect this medication from their local community pharmacy.

The practice will be taking no further action with regard to this activity and the transfer of responsibility has not taken place.

Additional comments:

Appendix 3

Template response to requests to follow up investigations performed in other settings

Dear x,

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

We write in response to your letter regarding the above patient requesting that we chase up theinvestigations undertaken by your department.

A copy of your request is enclosed.

This result of this investigation will automatically be sent to you or your department as the requesting clinician. Please note that as per GMC guidance, it is the responsibility of the doctor requesting a test to take clinical responsibility to follow up and take appropriate action on the result.

We would therefore respectfully request that you follow up the result and take any action accordingly. You will be aware of the pressure general practice is under, resulting from an ever-increasing workload. We would ask that you review your hospital policy on this issue, to avoid practices incurring inappropriate bureaucratic workload of chasing up results which are already in your possession, and which falls under your responsibility.

We will be proceeding on the assumption that you will be taking responsibility for reviewing and taking any action on the above investigation result(s).

Appendix 4

Template response to requests for post-operative checks

Dear x,

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

We write further to your letter of (insert date) requesting that we undertake a post-operative review on the above patient.

This work falls outside the remit of the General Practice contract and has not been commissioned from us as an enhanced service. The best person to undertake such a review is the surgeon who knows what procedure was performed, any difficulties or complications that occurred during surgery, and what post operative complications would be expected, if any. We therefore do not believe it is in the best interests of this patient for us to do this review and are unable to comply with your request.

Pressure on general practice means that we cannot take on inappropriate or unresourced work outside our contract, since this would detract from our core duty of care to patients

Appendix 5

Letter to hospital provider regarding discharge of patients after missed appointment (a similar adapted letter could be sent to the CCG to change commissioning specifications)

Dear x,

Your department has discharged this patient from your service following missing an appointment.

You have requested that we make a new GP referral for the patient to be seen.

You will be aware that general practice is under unprecedented workload pressures. It is not appropriate for GPs and staff to incur the additional bureaucracy and workload to re-refer patients after a single missed appointment. Additionally many GP appointments are wasted due to patients seeing a GP for the sole administrative purpose of a re-referral, and which could instead have been offered to other patients.

We are asking you to review your policy to either routinely send patients a further appointment, or to allow patients to reinstate their missed appointment within a specified time directly with your appointment department, in order to not incur unnecessary additional bureaucracy on hard pressed GP surgeries.

We have copied our CCG to inform them of this.

We look forward to hearing from you

Appendix 6

Template letter to CCG regarding inappropriate workload transfer

Dear x,

INAPPROPRIATE TRANSFER OF WORK TO THIS PRACTICE

We are writing to inform you that the following inappropriate work has been requested from our practice.

Source of inappropriate workload request:

Details of request (include copy of letter):

This work is not part of our contractual requirement, nor has it been resourced as an enhanced service. Given the extreme pressures that general practices are under, we are not able to take on this additional and inappropriate work, which will detract from and adversely affect our ability to provide core GP services to patients.

We would ask you to review the service specification with the provider for this particular service to ensure that such work is not inappropriately transferred to general practice in the future.

With many thanks

Cc LMC

Appendix 7

Template letter for request to complete non-contractual administrative task

Dear x,

We recently received a request from you to carry out (insert description of work, eg questionnaire, or information request requested)

This work is not part of our contractual requirements. You will be aware that general practice is under unprecedented pressure, and therefore we are unable to carry out your request, since this would detract from our ability to provide core contracted services to our patients.

Appendix 8

Template response to requests for work absence sick notes for less than seven days

Dear x (employer name)

(patient details)

We are writing to remind you that it is the responsibility of employees to self-certificate for any absence from work through illness of less than seven days duration.

Unfortunately, pressures on general practice mean that we are having to review our work to ensure that we are able to focus on our key duty of care for patients, and so we are unable to provide sick notes for absences of less than a week.

Appendix 9

Template letter to area team regarding delay to information request or payment

Dear x,

We are writing to inform you that we have been attempting to

- obtain information regarding (provide details)
- chase payments for (provide details):

We have contacted your department since: (details) and have yet to receive a response.

You will be aware that GP practices are under unprecedented workload pressures. It is not acceptable that practices should incur such delays in receiving responses to such requests, and for busy staff to be diverted into the bureaucracy and workload of chasing this up, rather than providing their core services for patients.

Please can we receive a response to our request by...

We have copied the Local Medical Committee to assist us if the information is not forthcoming