

## Going into hospital for an op? Been ill and in hospital? Likely to be off work? Need a sick note?

If you are likely to need a sick note when you come out of hospital, please ask the doctor treating you in hospital to provide you with one *before you leave*. This information sheet gives you some myths and facts about this issue.

“Consultants/junior hospital doctors don’t write sick notes. It’s a GP’s job” – **FALSE!**

“The hospital just don’t have any sick note pads” – **FALSE!**

“The hospital can only issue notes for one or two weeks at the very most” – **FALSE!**

“You’ve only been to outpatients, but you can’t work - the hospital can’t issue you with a sick note” – **FALSE!**

“The doctor who is treating you at the time has a statutory obligation to provide you with a sick note if you need one. This includes all hospital doctors” – **TRUE!**

“The doctor who is treating you should sign you off for the appropriate time period according to the condition you have been treated for” – **TRUE!**

“Both private and NHS doctors can issue sick notes” – **TRUE!**

This is an extract from the guidance from the Department of Work and Pensions about sick notes (also known as doctors’ statements or Med 3s in this text):

### **Responsibility for issuing statements**

The duty to provide a statement rests with the doctor who has clinical responsibility for the patient at the time. Hospitals are required to provide all certificates for social security and Statutory Sick Pay purposes and doctors' statements for both in-patients and outpatients who are incapable of work. The Med 3 should be issued on discharge from hospital where a hospital doctor advises a patient to refrain from work, and the doctor was attending and had clinical responsibility for the patient at the time this advice was given. In such cases the Med 3 should be issued for an appropriate forward period. Responsibility for issuing further certificates rests with the doctor who assumes clinical responsibility for treating the incapacitating condition. In cases where the GP has not taken over responsibility for the incapacitating condition, responsibility for issuing further certificates will rest with the treating clinician.

Thousands of appointments and telephone calls with GPs are taken up each year by patients requesting sick notes when, quite simply, sick notes could have been issued by the doctors providing hospital treatment at the time. Please help us to keep our appointments free for patients who have a clinical need, rather than for administrative paperwork that could have easily been dealt with at the end of your hospital stay.

If you have trouble getting a sick note from the hospital, please ring the PALS (Patient Advice Liaison Service) team for Derbyshire Royal Infirmary and Derby City General Hospital on 0800 783 7691 for further help.