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**Paying to see a consultant privately for your health problem.**

We understand that some patients will opt to pay to have some or all of their treatment privately and support your right to do so. However, to prevent any misunderstanding we would like to take this opportunity to explain how the NHS and general practice work alongside private providers of care.

**I want to pay to be seen privately following my GP consultation.**

You should contact the private provider or your insurance company directly to discuss making an appointment and then contact the secretaries at Ash Trees Surgery with all the relevant information via 01524 720000.

**What happens next?**

Your GP will write an appropriate referral letter and send it to the consultant that you have both agreed to. This will include any relevant medical details about you and your current problem.

Should there be any appointment queries, you should contact the private provider directly and not the surgery.

**For patients making use of health insurance**

Your GP will write an appropriate referral letter and it will be sent directly to the insurance company for approval or in some cases direct to the private provider. This will include any relevant medical details about you and your current condition. We would encourage you to wait until this letter is completed before making an appointment. Please inform the practice secretaries of all your details to ensure the referral is sent to the correct department for consideration and approval.

Please note that if an insurance company wishes for a specific form to be completed you may be charged for this additional work.

**What do I do if I have any questions about my private care?**

If you have any specific questions related to your private care, you should **contact the consultant’s team** directly, usually via their secretary.

**What happens if I need a test or procedure?**

If the consultant thinks that you need any tests (including blood tests), or a particular procedure, the consultant is responsible for:

• arranging the test/procedure and any medications that might be needed for this as well as explaining how and when you will receive a date and what to do if the date is not suitable for you

• giving you the results and explaining what they mean (this may be done in a separate appointment with the consultant or by letter).

**Please do not contact the practice to discuss the results of tests organised by the consultant**.

It is the consultant’s responsibility to discuss your results with you. They are taking care of you for this problem and have all the information to hand to help and advise you.



**What happens if I need new medicines?**

The consultant might suggest new medications for the problem or might want to make changes to the medicines that you are already taking. The consultant is responsible for giving you the first prescription for any new medicine that you need to start taking straight away.

In some cases, once you have started this medication your GP may be able to continue to prescribe these medications. The GP will need to see a full clinic letter from the consultant outlining the reasons for treatment before deciding whether this might be appropriate.

Please wait at least seven days to allow this letter to arrive before contacting the surgery.

If a prescription is needed sooner than this you should contact the consultants team (via their secretary) for them to prescribe this.

Private consultantsmay suggest medications to patients which wouldn’t normally be prescribed by NHS GPs. If this is the case, you will need to continue to receive them from the consultant. Please contact them directly to organise this.

**Can I be referred to the NHS and to the private system at the same time?**

No – this is not possible. You should decide which route you wish to go down before the referral is made.

**What happens if I want to transfer my care back to the NHS?**

If after seeing the consultant privately you want to go back to receiving NHS care, then national regulations do allow for you to transfer your care back. This transfer ideally needs to be done by the private consultant who is overseeing your care but if this is not possible, please request that your consultant writes directly to the practice to request this.

Should you wish to transfer back to the NHS for any necessary ongoing investigations and procedures you will join the NHS list with no priority and will be referred in accordance with current referral guidelines.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/nhs-services-and-treatments/if-i-pay-for-private-treatment-how-will-my-nhs-care-be-affected/>

*This information has been created using information from the British Medical Association and government sources.*