



By email from: cno@gov.scot

Dear colleague,

Fit-notes – Extension of Certification to other Healthcare Professions

From 1 July 2022 new UK-wide legislation will be enacted to extend the breadth of healthcare professions who will be permitted to complete and issue fit-notes.

The legislation will allow registered nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists to legally certify fit-notes, in addition to registered medical practitioners who are currently the only profession able to do so.

This legislation is permissive, and so allows, rather than mandates, those professions named to undertake this aspect of practice if their role, scope of practice and employer deem it desirable. The policy intention is that ‘where’ a fit-note is issued (such as during episodes of care in primary and secondary care environments) will remain the same, but there will be a wider range of health professionals who are able to issue these. A fit-note should only be issued following a full assessment of a person's fitness for work, which may require access to their full medical record.

With specific reference to pharmacists, those working in multidisciplinary teams within general practice or hospital settings will be able to support this intention, however given the inaccessibility of electronic patient notes, pharmacists working in community pharmacy will **not** undertake fit-note certification as an element of their role.

Guidance and training has been developed to support eligible health care professionals; the guidance provides a summary of the knowledge, skills, experience and training that healthcare professionals eligible to sign fit notes are expected to have before certifying fit notes.

From the Chief Nursing Officer, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Chief Allied Health Professions Officer

Professor Alex McMahon
Professor Sir Gregor Smith
Professor Alison Strath
Carolyn McDonald

30 June 2022

DL (2022) 23

Addresses

For action

Primary Care Leads
Directors of Nursing
Directors of Pharmacy
AHP Directors

For information

Chief Executives
Directors of Human Resources

Further Enquiries

PrimaryCareLeads@gov.scot



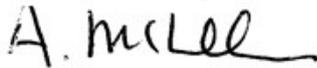
The e-learning covers the importance of good work for good health and how the fit note can be used to support good quality work and health conversations. It is available on the HEE e-learning for healthcare hub (elfh) <https://portal.elfh.org.uk/>. Anyone with an NHS email address can register for an elfh account. There will also be a signposting page to the guidance, FAQ and e-learning on Turas Learn: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/62161/fit-note-certification>. The Fit Note e-learning on elfh and Turas Learn page will be available from 01 July 2022.

Additionally, the legislation removes the need for a 'wet' signature and therefore allows for electronic completion of fit-notes. A rollout period is underway where GP IT systems will be updated to reflect this initial change; the implementation of functionality to allow wider health professions will commence from 1st July. This will enable practices to review how they currently operate and how they can benefit from the introduction of these changes.

For secondary care the current paper-based process will continue. The Department for Work and Pensions is however reviewing this area to specify potential changes to process for further consultation and how Secondary Care systems may need to change to support this.

We hope this information is helpful, and supports facilitation of any changes you may wish to initiate.

Yours sincerely



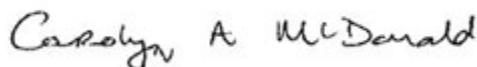
Professor Alex McMahan
Chief Nursing Officer



Professor Sir Gregor Smith
Chief Medical Officer



Professor Alison Strath
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer



Carolyn McDonald
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer

