

PRIVATE REFERRAL & FOLLOW UP

GP PRACTICE POLICY

This is necessary due to previous instances where problems have arisen, and is to clarify Consultant / GP responsibilities and roles, and ensure patient expectations are appropriate, and correctly informed.

INFO FOR PATIENTS

- If you see a private Consultant, they may suggest further simple tests such as bloods, urine or stool tests etc, or more complex tests such as X-rays, scans, scopes depending on the problem. These should also be done within the private sector and **should be factored into total costs.**
- If the Consultant suggests a prescription, we are often happy to do an NHS prescription, but only if it is a licensed drug used appropriately, and is in the **Northern Ireland formulary**, but GPs retain the right to decline prescribing if they have significant concerns, and the Consultant is still able to prescribe by themselves privately .
- Depending on what treatment / prescription a Consultant recommends, patients should understand and be aware they **may have to pay for any ongoing treatment or medications which are recommended** (which the GP is not able or willing to prescribe for the reasons above).
- **Sufficient post-operative medication**, e.g. pain relief or anticoagulation, should be provided at discharge following procedures carried out by private sector providers, without needing a GP prescription.

INFO FOR THE CONSULTANT

- If you wish to perform **investigations** including bloods etc , these should be done within the PRIVATE system, and it is not acceptable practice to expect the NHS/GP to perform these and thus supplement private practice.
- If a **prescription** is recommended for a patient then we are happy to prescribe IF this falls within normal NHS GP practice, and we would ask you work within the same guidelines as GPs, using the NI formulary , found at : <https://niformulary.hscni.net/formulary/chapter-summaries/> . Anything that lies outside the formulary, including unlicensed, red and amber list (shared care) medications should not be presumed to be suitable for NHS GP prescribing. Your prescription advice may be returned with an explanation why it isn't suitable.
- If you decide the patient needs **onwards referral** via the NHS to either yourself (on the NHS) or another Consultant, this can and should be done by the Consultant themselves, and **please do not expect the GP to do this**. The guidance explaining this is found at : <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/management-private-practice-handbook.pdf>