**October 2023**

# Practice workload control letter templates – GPC Wales

The following template letters have been developed to help practices manage workload, in line with the *All-Wales Communication Standards between Primary and Secondary Care* and the BMA Cymru Wales *Safe working for GPs in Wales* guidance.

How to use this document:

1. select the appendix of your interest.
2. edit as appropriate, ensuring you remove the highlighted sections.

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## Template response to secondary care work transfer

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

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 the Welsh GMS contract.
* This work has not been commissioned by the Health Board.
* 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.

Yours faithfully

## Template response to inappropriate prescribing requests

*Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>*

Dear X

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of drug (add as many as appropriate)** | **Dose and frequency** | **Indication** | **Treatment duration**  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

We are declining to take over the responsibility for prescribing due to the following reasons:

(Use as appropriate)

|  |
| --- |
|[ ]  Drug not in the [*Insert name*] Health Board formulary. (Hospital doctors are asked not to request that GPs initiate treatment with a non-formulary drug unless previously agreed. |
|[ ]  Drug not in the [*Insert name*] Health Board formulary for this particular indication |
|[ ]  Hospital only drug |
|[ ]  Hospital clinical trial drug |
|[ ]  Unlicensed drug |
|[ ]  Unlicensed indication |
|[ ]  Unlicensed dose |
|[ ]  Drug is shared care but documentation not completed |
|[ ]  The drug is on the list of drugs not suitable for prescribing |
|[ ]  Patient not stabilised on drug |
|[ ]  Insufficient prescribing information available. Please state information needed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|[ ]  Other (please give details below)**Please note that any clinical reasons not to prescribe requires additional communication to the consultant e.g. telephone, letter, email**. |
| General comments: |

**We would be grateful if you would arrange for the patient to receive this medication via the hospital pharmacy or other relevant Health Board facility.**

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

Yours faithfully

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

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

Dear X,

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

A copy of your request is enclosed.

The result of this investigation will automatically be sent to you or your department as the requesting clinician. Please note that as per GMC guidance, and the **All Wales Communication Standards between Primary and Secondary Care** (Welsh Health Circular 2018/014[[1]](#footnote-1)), 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).

Yours faithfully

## Template response to requests for post-operative checks

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

Dear x,

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.

Yours faithfully

## Template letter to Health Board regarding inappropriate workload transfer

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

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 Welsh GMS 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 for this service to ensure that such work is not inappropriately transferred to general practice in the future, and that you involve the Local Medical Committee in this task.

With many thanks

Yours faithfully

Cc \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ LMC

## 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, e.g., 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.

Yours faithfully

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

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

Dear x (employer name)

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 can 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.

Yours faithfully

## Template letter to Health Board 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.

Yours faithfully

cc. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_LMC

## Template letter to Health Board regarding follow up of diagnostic test results following a patient’s discharge from hospital

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

Dear X

We received a copy of patient X’s results on (insert date)

You will be aware of the **All-Wales Communication Standards between Primary and Secondary** **Care** (Welsh Health Circular 2018/014)[[2]](#footnote-2) ***.*** We therefore assume that this is for information only, and that a relevant clinician in your department has actioned this.

In future, can we suggest that all copies of test results which have been initiated while under the care of secondary care services is marked **‘for information only’.** This is in line with Standards 2 and 3 of the All Wales Standards:

*2 Results of investigations remain the responsibility of the requesting clinician.*

*3 It is the responsibility of the requesting doctor to arrange for investigations to be carried out.*

We have copied our Local Medical Committee to inform them of this. We thank you for your understanding.

Yours faithfully

Cc \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ LMC

## Template letter to Health Board response to requests to follow up investigations performed in other settings and diagnostic test results following a patient’s discharge from hospital

Re: <<Patient Identifier Label>>

Dear X,

## FOLLOW UP OF DIAGNOSTIC TEST RESULTS FOLLOWING A PATIENT’S DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL

We are writing to inform you that we (delete option as appropriate)

1. have received a copy of an investigation result from the **X** Department of Hospital **Y**, without confirmation of being actioned by the requesting hospital clinician.
2. have been requested to chase up a result of an investigation requested by a hospital clinician

A copy of the above is attached.

In keeping with the **All-Wales Communication Standards between Primary and Secondary Care** (Welsh Health Circular 2018/014)[[3]](#footnote-3) , the ‘*Results of investigations remain the responsibility of the requesting clinician*’ (Standard 2) and that ‘*it is the responsibility of the requesting doctor to arrange for*

*investigations to be carried out’* (Standard 3)**.**

We therefore request that as the responsible Health Board you ensure that your departments adhere to these important standards, and to require that hospital-initiated investigations are reviewed and acted on by the requesting clinician or relevant hospital department. Any copies of test results issued to practices should be marked ‘**for information only’** to avoid any confusion regarding responsibilities.

With many thanks

Yours faithfully

cc. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ LMC

1. <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/all-wales-communication-standards-between-primary-and-secondary-care.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/all-wales-communication-standards-between-primary-and-secondary-care.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/all-wales-communication-standards-between-primary-and-secondary-care.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)