



BEAUFORT ROAD SURGERY

Advice and information for patients requesting a letter or Doctor's note

We are currently receiving high volumes of requests for doctors letters or 'sick notes' in relation to the current coronavirus outbreak. We understand that this is a new and confusing area for all, and we have therefore written this information leaflet to help to provide you and your employer with some guidance.

1. I have symptoms of coronavirus and have been self-isolating for 7 days

You can self-certify for the first 7 days as usual. You therefore do not need a sick note, or a letter from your GP.

2. I have symptoms of coronavirus and have been unwell for MORE than 7 days

If this is the case, you should visit the 111 website to download a sick note here: <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note> .

3. I don't have symptoms, but someone in my household does and I am therefore self-isolating for two weeks as per government advice

You should use this link to download a 'self isolation certificate' which you can give to your employer. <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note> . This is not something your GP is able to provide.

4. I've received a letter from the government advising me I am in the very high risk shielding group

This acts as a sick note. You can give a copy to your employer with no further action required from your GP. You can register for additional help if you require on the 111 website, here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

5. I'm at risk, but have not received a letter advising me to shield

The government have set out specific criteria for patients who are clinically extremely vulnerable and should be shielding. This group should follow the shielding advice in the letter they will have already received. We are aware that there are patients who are identified as being clinically at risk, but who do not meet the current 'extremely vulnerable'

shielding criteria, such as most asthmatics and diabetic patients. Unless we receive additional advice from the UK government asking us to add patients to this extremely vulnerable list, we are unable to issue a shielding letter, or sick note in this instance. You are instead advised to follow the current advice on stringent social distancing, avoid touching your face and wash your hands regularly.

If you are now being asked to return to work, we would strongly urge you to discuss any concerns with your employer or HR department. Your employer is responsible for putting in place arrangements for your safe working during this time. You should discuss this directly with them. Your GP is unfortunately unable to assist with this. Further advice on stringent social distancing for people at risk can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

6. I'm in an extremely vulnerable group, but someone I live with has to go back to work and I need a letter so they can shield with me. Or, I have to go back to work but someone I live with is in an extremely vulnerable group and I need to stay at home to protect them.

The government advice is that if one member of a household is in a shielding group, the whole household do not need to shield. There's further information on how to protect yourself in this instance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

7. Those in full time education

There is no NHS requirement to issue certification to schools or colleges, regardless of medical conditions. Schools and colleges etc must work with parents to ensure that any absence is accurately and appropriately recorded. This does not require a doctor's note and you therefore do not need to contact your GP for one.

For employers:

As per the current Public Health England and UK government guidelines, your employee will be advised to self-isolate if they show symptoms or have been in contact with someone showing symptoms of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Medical certificates for this will be provided by 111. Your employee can still self-certify for the first 7 days of sickness as per current law.

We strongly ask that employers exhibit discretion when requesting medical evidence for a period of absence due to COVID-19. Our GP's have a responsibility to prioritise the clinical assessment and management of their patients during this challenging period, and we thank you for helping us with this.

This note was written by your GP Surgery. Please accept this as a reply to your request for a sick note letter from the surgery.