

Fitness to Practice for Dental Staff

We have had some enquiries about “fitness to practice certificates” for dentists and their staff. The dentists and their staff need to get this certificate, but it is **not** part of GMS and you are entitled to charge for it. All laboratory tests and X-rays are therefore also private and you need to clarify the charges of your local hospital before you start. You could of course not do this work and refer the patient to an occupational health service or other private provider. Should you decide to do this the patient is entitled to ask for a copy of his/her record under the Data Protection Act.

Below is an extract from GPC advice on this matter. They hope to agree a sensible way forward with the GDC in the future, but meanwhile we can only offer this general advice. Can we ask colleagues to carefully read what is being asked of them as this is a far more detailed examination and report. Failure to complete correctly might cause problems if something adverse occurs in future years.

As we cannot advise a fee, we suggest that including laboratory/x-ray fees which are out of our control, that GPs are probably looking at a full examination and report (around 45mins) plus x-ray and lab costs.

General Advice

The General Dental Committee has devised a new form for GPs to complete to state that dentists and their staff are fit to practice. This form was produced without consultation with the General Practitioners Committee. There are a number of issues:

On the clinical front

1. GPC have asked the GDC to consider whether for UK/Europe trained dental surgeons and DCPs (dental care professionals ie hygienists, technicians and dental nurses) there is any need for TB screening although those from outside UK/Europe might need it. In any event the GPC have asked GDC to consult their occupational health advisors as to whether there is any cost benefit in risk reduction by doing a CXR.
2. As far as infectious disease is concerned GPC have asked the GDC to specify exactly what they want GPs to screen for.
3. GPC have asked GDC to stipulate exactly what visual standards they require - possibly as per HGV licence.

On the operational front GPC have asked the GDC to:-

1. To put into their literature that there **WILL** be a significant charge comprising the doctors time and also laboratory/X ray fees.
2. That it may take up to 2 weeks to complete the process because of the delays in reporting of results.
3. That it will be necessary for the GP to be in possession of the GP notes to complete the forms and that persons coming down from university may find that their notes are in transit for several

weeks between University Health service and their new practice and therefore this work should be done in the early summer at the university.