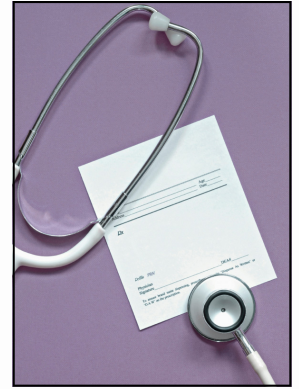


# FACTSHEET ON THE NEW “FIT” NOTES – MED3 FROM APRIL 2010

## Statement of Fitness for Work or 'Fit Note'

The rules for sickness certification are changing in April 2010 for the first time since 1984. Sick notes are changing to fit notes. You should receive a 24 page glossy booklet from the Department of Work and Pensions about the changes but here are the main changes in practice:



## DIFFERENCES

- You can certify from a telephone consultation
- Your certificate is advice to patients and not binding on employers
- There is usually no need for a “signing-off” note at the end of an illness
- Forms Med3 (old style), Med5, Med4 and Med6 have gone
- Form RM7 has gone along with your ability to refer to the “RMO”
- For the initial 6 months of absence you may only certify 3 months at a time

## THE SAME

- You still do not need to certify the first 7 calendar days of sickness absence

## FILLING IN THE FORM

- If you tick “you may be fit...” you must tick a box or add comments to the box below, which may be a recommendation for an occupational health assessment
- If you put in the dates of sickness, this can refer to a past assessment at which no notes was issued (similar to the old Med5), or it can be a period of less than 14 days for which there was no need to reassess the patient or it can have an end date to motivate your patient to return to work on a particular date.
- Remember to delete as appropriate at the “I will/will not need to assess your fitness again at the end of this period”

## IF YOUR PATIENT SAYS THEIR EMPLOYER NEEDS A “SIGNING-OFF” CERTIFICATE

- This is not required to be provided.
- “If an employer feels they require such advice they can seek this from a General Practitioner or Occupational Health Service via a private arrangement” - this means you can charge for this service.

## PRIVATE SICK NOTES

You are under no contractual obligation to issue these. However, if an employers insists, you can advise the patient of the cost of a private note at your usual rates. The Family Doctor Association cannot advise on the level of payment required due to competition legislation.

The Family Doctor Association is a registered educational charity no. 299871 founded in 1985 to further improve the quality of care provided for patients in family doctor practices.

March 2010 Dr Peter Swinyard National Chairman  
[www.family-doctor.org.uk](http://www.family-doctor.org.uk)

