



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00497/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

16 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your e-mail of 11 February regarding Petition P-05-947 regarding charging for GP letters.

A Healthier Wales sets out our plan for health services based on the principles of prudent healthcare, with the right person providing the right care at the right time. In many cases a GP will not be the best placed person to provide support to a student - welfare support officers or counsellors may be better able to support students when making cases for extenuating circumstances.

GPs provide NHS services free of charge to patients within the parameters of the general medical services contract. However, as independent contractors they may elect, in some circumstances, to charge for the completion of forms or reports for third parties that are not in connection with the provision of NHS health care.

The BMA suggests fees that GPs may charge their patients for non-NHS work (i.e. work not covered under their contract with the NHS) in order to help GPs set their own professional fees. However, the fees suggested by the BMA are intended for guidance only and are not recommendations and a doctor is not obliged to charge the rates the BMA suggests. This is in order to comply with legislation preventing anti-competitive practice. This means that the decision and amount to charge for such services will vary from practice to practice and sometimes will not be imposed at all.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'V' and 'G'.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services