



## Consortium of Local Medical Committees

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To Head Teacher

### RE: GP Letters for Examinations

It has come to our attention that GPs are receiving requests for letters to support special consideration for examinations. We are writing, therefore, to remind you of the necessary steps that should be taken in differing circumstances, which are backed by Ofqual, The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the Department of Education.

#### Medical Certification & Special Consideration Letters

When a child suffers from a long-term condition, any certification will be provided by the responsible specialist and should not be requested from the GP, unless the request is for medical information such as a copy of a patient's medical records.

In cases where a child has recurrent short-term illnesses this is a matter for very sensitive and expert management by the school and the School's Health Service in consultation with the parents and the child. The Link School Nurse (or School Doctor for some private schools) should seek any additional medical information by directly contacting the GP with the consent of the parent or the child if competent to give legally valid consent.

It is not a GP's responsibility to issue letters. At a time where the NHS is seeing record breaking requests for medical care, we need your help to reserve NHS appointments for the most vulnerable.

#### Exam related stress

JCQ will not consider exam related stress as a special consideration. Please do not request letters or medical evidence for this. JCQ will only consider special consideration if the pupil has stress or anxiety where medication has been prescribed ([JCQ, 2020](#)) and/or has substantial long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day- to – day activities ([Disability under the Equality Act 2010](#)).

#### When a child misses an examination

GPs are not contractually obliged to provide a sick note for pupils who are off sick from school. GPs do not provide short term sickness certification for periods of less than 7 days and are unable to issue medical certificates for longer periods of sickness absence unless the patient was seen by the GP at the time of the illness.

They are also not obliged to provide sickness certification for students that miss an exam or believe their performance was affected due to illness.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Higgins

Chief Executive of Lancashire & Cumbria Consortium of Local Medical Committees