**Private care policy**

We are aware that given current NHS wait times some of our patients will opt to see a private doctor. This statement clarifies our position on prescriptions and tests which may arise from a private consultation.

Our policyis based on guidance from the Northern Ireland Department of Health( updated September 2024) British Medical Association, General Medical Council (Good Medical Practice) and Medical Protection Services.

If we are asked to prescribe a medication by aprivate doctor, we need to be satisfied that the prescribing is safe ,effective and clinically appropriate and in accordance with local guidelines.

We will not prescribe medication or undertake investigations in the following circumstances:

* We have not received adequate communication from the private doctor to explain the reasons you need the medicine and that they have discussed the safety of the medication with you.
* The medication is not prescribed on the NHS local service.
* The medication is only suitable for specialist-only prescribing and we do not

have the specialist expertise to safely monitor the medication (shared care medications**)**. Examples include –

* ADHD medications
* Cardiac medication
* Acne medication
* Puberty blocker medication

This list is not exhaustive.

* The use of the medication is not compatible with national or local prescribing guidelines.
* The medication is not licenced in the UK or is being used for a purpose not included in its UK licence.
* We do not believe the medication is clinically necessary.
* You are seen by a private doctor without a GP referral as we cannot be sure that the doctor is fully aware of your medical history and other medications you are taking.
* The private practitioner is not a GMC registered Doctor

Please note that the same rules apply for other NHS doctors (eg hospital specialists) asking GPs to take over prescribing of a medication.

It is important to be aware when accessing a referral to a private provider you may have to pay for any ongoing treatment or medications recommended by the private provider. If the medication applies to one of the above categories, you should speak to your private doctor to decide what to do next. You retain the option of a private prescription through your private doctor.

If your care needs to be initiated or monitored via a specialist, we would be happy to discuss a referral to an NHS provider with whom we can professionally safely share your care.

If you avail of private health care outside of Northern Ireland, it is important to ensure that all pre and post treatment costs are included in the overall package of care. This includes blood tests, scans, prescriptions and wound care.You will not be entitled to related pre or post treatment support from this practice. Patients will be able to continue to access emergency care where necessary. This is in accordance to the Department of Health Policy in December 2022. Please be aware that there is currently no NHS service for bariatric (weight loss) surgery here and NHS follow up is therefore not possible.