



# REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA) CLAIMS AND APPEALS

## Guidance for Sheffield GPs

GPs have a statutory obligation to provide statements of incapacity to patients on their list (Fit Notes/Med3) and certain information to healthcare professionals working for the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments (CHDA) on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) when requested (ESA113/FRR2).

We have received assurances from the DWP that patients are not asked to request information directly from their GP. If Jobcentre Plus or the CHDA considers that further medical evidence is necessary, they will seek it.

CHDA guidance *Supporting you to support your patient with benefit assessments* gives examples of the types of information most useful to CHDA, along with examples of evidence they are not able to use. The guidance can be accessed via:

<http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/website/IGP217/files/Completing%20Further%20Medical%20Evidence%20Forms.pdf>

Further information about the CHDA, their role in the benefit claim and appeals processes and a Q&A section for GPs can be found at [www.chdauk.co.uk](http://www.chdauk.co.uk).

*DWP Medical (Factual) Reports* also offers background information on each form and clarification on specific questions, in an attempt to make the processes as effective as possible:

[http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/website/IGP217/files/DWP%20Medical%20\(Factual\)%20Reports.pdf](http://www.sheffield-lmc.org.uk/website/IGP217/files/DWP%20Medical%20(Factual)%20Reports.pdf).

There is no requirement for GPs to provide reports or offer an opinion on incapacity for work to anyone else, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. We have made it clear to Citizens Advice representatives that they should not involve GPs in this process. When refusing to provide information directly to the patient, GPs would be advised to:

1. Inform the patient that mechanisms are in place for relevant information to be requested from GPs by a number of organisations involved in the process.
2. Make it clear that the refusal to provide medical evidence should not be taken as having any bearing on the case in question.

If the patient thinks that further medical evidence is necessary to support their claim or appeal, they should contact Jobcentre Plus or the CHDA, clearly stating their reasons for believing that further evidence is necessary.