

MOUNTVIEW SURGERY - PRIVATE REFERRAL POLICY

Please find enclosed your private referral letter. Before proceeding, it is important to understand how your care will be managed alongside NHS services.

Information for Patients

If you choose to be seen privately, responsibility for your care rests with your private provider for that episode of care.

Investigations

Any tests requested by your private consultant (e.g. blood tests, X-rays, ultrasound, MRI scans) must be arranged privately. GP practices are not permitted to organise NHS investigations to support private care.

Prescriptions (following private consultation)

Your GP may prescribe on the NHS only if:

- The medication is licensed
- It is clinically appropriate for GP prescribing
- It is included in the Northern Ireland formulary

Your GP will not prescribe:

- 'Amber' or 'Red' drugs requiring specialist monitoring
- Unlicensed medications
- Medications initiated privately that fall outside NHS guidance

In these cases, your private consultant must prescribe, and you will be responsible for the cost.

Shared Care

Mountview Surgery **does not** enter into shared care arrangements with private providers.

Ongoing Care Costs

Please remember you may need to pay for follow-up appointments, monitoring and review, medications

Post-Operative Care (Including Wound Care)

If you undergo a procedure in the private sector, responsibility for your aftercare remains with your private provider. GP practices and community nursing teams are not commissioned to provide routine aftercare for private procedures.

Routine Wound Care includes wound checks, dressing changes, suture or clip removal. These should be arranged and carried out by your private provider.

Dressings and Equipment

Any dressings or equipment required should be supplied by the private provider or arranged privately.

Complications

If you develop concerns such as: increasing pain, redness or swelling, discharge from the wound or fever you should contact your private provider in the first instance.

The NHS may provide care only where clinically necessary and urgent, based on patient safety (for example, suspected infection or significant wound complications).

Post-Procedural Prescriptions

Private providers are responsible for supplying adequate medication at discharge, including pain relief or anticoagulation. Patients should not be directed to their GP for immediate post-procedure prescriptions.

Important Guidance

On 5 December 2023, the Department of Health Northern Ireland advised:

‘where a patient seeks pre and/or post treatment care specific to their private treatment, they will not be entitled to such support from primary or secondary care services in Northern Ireland. Therefore, it will be important for the individual to ensure that all pre and post treatment costs are included in the overall package of care procured from the private healthcare provider.’

Patients should ensure that all pre- and post-treatment care is included within their private care package.

Information for Private Consultants

To ensure safe and appropriate care:

Investigations

All investigations (including blood tests and imaging) must be arranged within the private sector. It is not appropriate to request NHS GPs to undertake investigations for private patients.

Prescribing

GPs will only prescribe medications that are within the Northern Ireland formulary or fall within routine GP prescribing practice. Requests outside this scope (including unlicensed, red or amber drugs) will be declined.

Post-Operative Care

Private providers are responsible for all routine post-operative care, including wound management and follow-up. Patients should not be redirected to GP or community services for routine aftercare.

Referrals

If onward NHS referral is required (including transfer to NHS care), this must be completed by the consultant. Please do not direct patients back to their GP to initiate NHS referrals following private consultation.

Further guidance is available in the Health NI Management of Private Practice Handbook