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## **Practice Policy Regarding Private Medical Care**

We are aware that NHS waiting lists are currently long, and many patients are choosing to arrange consultations with private specialists, sometimes without our knowledge or recommendation. Whilst we understand why you may wish to do this, it is important to be aware that your GP surgery may not necessarily be able to follow privately made recommendations with NHS investigations or prescriptions.

As non-specialists, we are not always able to prescribe medications or monitor conditions that would normally be prescribed or overseen by an NHS specialist. There are existing arrangements between us and NHS clinics to cover such scenarios, called "shared care agreements". The British Medical Association provides clear guidance that GP practices should not enter into shared care agreements with private providers. Please be aware that if a private clinic recommends specialist-only medications, they will need to prescribe the medication and organise any necessary monitoring.

If we agree with suggested non-specialist medications (and they would be considered part of normal GP care), then this may be permissible, provided it is in accordance with local NHS prescribing policy. Any patient can request to have their care transferred from the private sector to the NHS; however, normal waiting times would apply.

We do not recommend that any of our patients seek healthcare abroad, including surgery. We are unable to support overseas treatment with any blood tests, wound care, or ongoing monitoring—this would all need to be undertaken by a private provider locally. We cannot organise this on your behalf and are unable to recommend specific private providers.

Our policy is in place to ensure that you receive safe and appropriate care when seeking private treatment.

We are grateful for your understanding.