

Private Requests and Services

Sedative Medication Requests

For Use In:	Jessop Medical Practice
For Use By:	All Staff Groups & Patients
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Contents

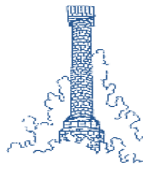
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1. Introduction

General practice services provided under the NHS are funded to deliver essential medical care and treatment to registered patients. However, there are occasions when patients, third parties, employers, insurers, solicitors, or other organisations request services, reports, forms, letters, certificates, or medical examinations fall outside the scope of NHS-funded services. These are known as private (non-NHS) services and may attract a fee.

This policy outlines the approach taken by Jessop Medical Practice in relation to private requests and services. It aims to ensure that requests are managed fairly, consistently, transparently, and in accordance with relevant NHS guidance, General Medical Council (GMC) standards, and contractual obligations. The policy also provides clarity for patients and staff regarding which services are covered by the NHS and which services are considered private work.

The Practice recognises that patients may require documentation or medical information for a variety of purposes, including insurance applications, employment matters, fitness assessments, legal proceedings, education, travel, housing, adoption and fostering processes,



and other non-clinical requirements. Whilst the Practice will endeavour to assist where appropriate, GPs and other clinicians are not contractually obliged to undertake private work and reserve the right to decline requests where they are unable to provide the information requested or where the request falls outside their professional responsibilities.

Where private work is undertaken, charges will apply in accordance with the Practice's approved schedule of fees. Fees reflect the time, expertise, administration, and professional responsibility involved in completing the work. Payment may be required in advance, and timescales for completion will depend on clinical priorities and workload.

2. Procedures and MRI Scans

This section applies to requests for diazepam or other sedative medication prior to MRI scans, CT scans, hospital procedures, dental procedures, cosmetic procedures, private procedures, injections, or other investigations.

Sedation for procedures requires appropriate clinical assessment, prescribing, timing, monitoring, emergency rescue equipment, and aftercare. National guidance and safe prescribing principles recommend that sedation is provided by a suitably trained and credentialed team, with access to pre-procedure assessment, patient monitoring, resuscitation equipment, and reversal agents where required.

Practice Position

The organisation or clinician performing the procedure is responsible for assessing whether sedation is appropriate and arranging this where necessary.

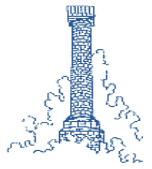
As the GP practice is not present during the procedure and cannot provide the required monitoring and aftercare, it is not safe or appropriate for the practice to prescribe sedative medication solely for use during procedures undertaken by other providers.

Where relevant, information already held within the patient's record, such as a history of claustrophobia, anxiety during previous procedures, or difficulties completing scans, may be shared with the requesting provider in accordance with information governance requirements.

Patients who feel they may require sedation should contact the organisation arranging the procedure, such as the radiology department, hospital team, dental practice, or private provider. These services are best placed to assess individual needs and discuss available options.

Staff Guidance

- Send the standard policy response to patients requesting sedation for procedures.
- Do not arrange a GP appointment solely to discuss procedural sedation requests.
- Advise patients to contact the provider arranging the procedure.



- Escalate to a clinician only where there is a separate clinical concern, an unmanaged anxiety disorder requiring assessment, or a patient safety issue that requires GP review.
- Ensure any relevant information already recorded in the patient's medical record is communicated to the requesting provider where appropriate.

3. Flying and Travel Anxiety

This section outlines the Practice's approach to requests for diazepam, lorazepam, alprazolam, temazepam, or other sedative medications for fear of flying, travel anxiety, airport anxiety, turbulence-related anxiety, long-haul flights, cruises, sleeping during travel, or requests for "just a few tablets" to help with travel.

The safety and wellbeing of our patients is our primary concern. Sedative medications, including benzodiazepines, can impair concentration, coordination, judgement, and the ability to respond appropriately during emergencies. While travelling, particularly by air, these medicines may:

- Reduce awareness and responsiveness during an emergency situation.
- Increase immobility, which may contribute to the risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) during prolonged journeys.
- Affect breathing, particularly during sleep or in individuals with underlying respiratory conditions.
- Interact with alcohol and other medications, leading to increased sedation or adverse effects.
- Cause paradoxical reactions in some individuals, resulting in agitation, aggression, or behavioural disturbance rather than relaxation.
- Create a risk of dependency and misuse.

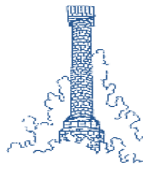
In addition, benzodiazepines are not recommended as a treatment for specific phobias, including fear of flying, and their use for this purpose falls outside current prescribing guidance.

Practice Position

Jessop Medical Practice does not prescribe benzodiazepines or other sedative medications solely for:

- Fear of flying.
- Travel-related anxiety.
- Anxiety associated with airports or turbulence.
- Long-haul flights.
- Cruises or other forms of travel.
- Helping patients sleep during travel.
- Requests for a small supply of sedatives for holiday or travel purposes.

Patients seeking support for anxiety may explore the following self-help resources.



- <https://flyingwithconfidence.com/>
- <https://www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com/>
- <https://www.virginatlantic.com/inspiration/your-journey-with-us/flying-without-fear>

Reference Documents and Resources

Sedation of Procedures and MRI Scans

- BNF Diazepam
<https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/diazepam/#important-safety-information>
- The Royal College of Radiologists
<https://www.rcr.ac.uk/our-services/all-our-publications/clinical-radiology-publications/sedation-analgesia-and-anaesthesia-in-radiology-third-edition/#:~:text=Safe%20and%20effective%20analgesia%20and,resuscitation%20equipment%20and%20reversal%20agents>

Diazepam for Flying and Travel Anxiety

- BNF Diazepam
<https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/diazepam/#important-safety-information>
- Flying Support and Courses
<https://flyingwithconfidence.com/>
<https://www.fearlessflyer.easyjet.com/>
<https://www.virginatlantic.com/inspiration/your-journey-with-us/flying-without-fear>