The new fit note

Employee guide to the new ‘fit note’

Helping you back to work after illness

From 6th April 2010 the Government is replacing the sick note that you may receive when visiting your GP with a new ‘fit note’.

With your employer's support, the fit note will help you return to work sooner by providing more information about the effects of your illness or injury.

What is the fit note?

The fit note will be called the ‘Statement of Fitness for Work’ and will be used in England, Scotland and Wales. It will have more information than the present GP’s sick note.

The main changes will mean:

- your GP will be able to say if they think you are ‘not fit for work’ or ‘may be fit for work’
- your GP can add advice to the note for your employer on how simple changes to the job you do may allow you to return to work earlier
- there will be fewer kinds of medical statements forms issued by GPs

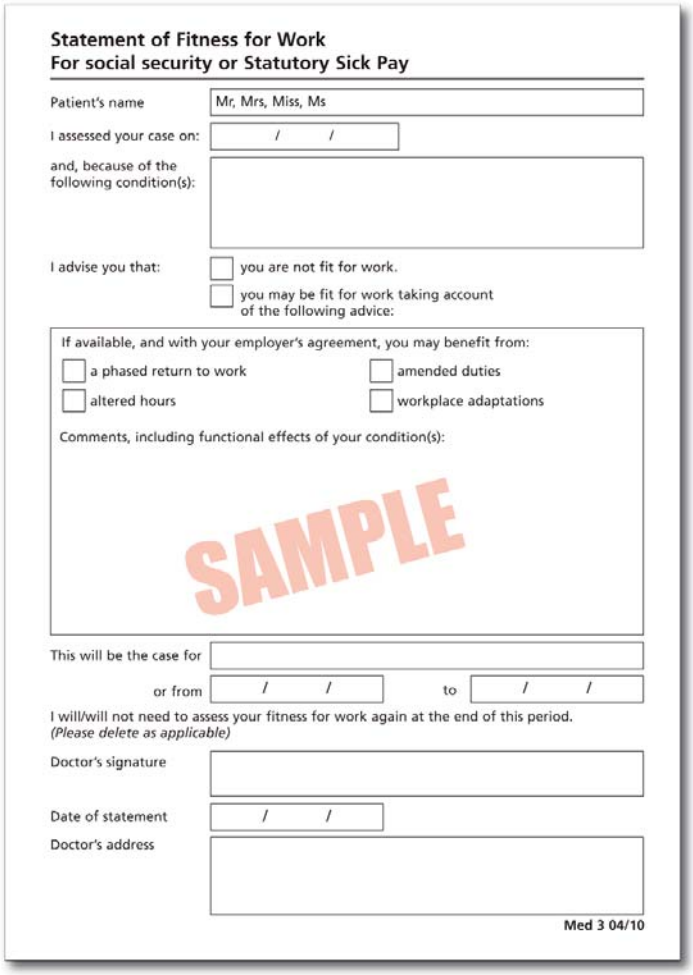
How the changes will help employees and employers

Research shows that long periods out of work can lead to worse health while working can be good for your physical and mental health and wellbeing. The longer you are absent through illness, the lower are the chances of you returning to work. Work may help you recover quicker from illness.

The new fit note is intended for both employees and employers by helping people back to work as soon as possible. Employees may benefit from better health and wellbeing because they have gone back to work. Employers will be able to keep skilled staff, contributing to the success of the business and reducing sickness absence.

Source: Direct.gov.uk

What does the fit note look like?



Statement of Fitness for Work
For social security or Statutory Sick Pay

Patient’s name: Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms

I assessed your case on: / /

and, because of the following condition(s):

I advise you that:
- ☐ you are not fit for work.
- ☐ you may be fit for work taking account of the following advice:

If available, and with your employer’s agreement, you may benefit from:
- ☐ a phased return to work
- ☐ amended duties
- ☐ altered hours
- ☐ workplace adaptations

Comments, including functional effects of your condition(s):

SAMPLE

This will be the case for

or from / / to / /

I will/will not need to assess your fitness for work again at the end of this period.
(Please delete as applicable)

Doctor’s signature

Date of statement / /

Doctor’s address

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What should I do with a fit note?

If you are given a fit note by your GP you should treat it in the same manner as the previous sick note and provide a copy to your employer. Be prepared to talk to your employer about any guidance that the GP has provided on the fit note.

redefining / standards

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