**Private and Confidential**

*[Insert name]*

*[Insert address]*

*[Insert date]*

Dear *[insert name]*,

Re: Changes to fit notes

You may or may not be aware that the law changed in April 2022, and it is no longer necessary for your doctor to sign your fit note. They may now instead issue the document digitally, with a digital signature instead. As such, should you have the need to obtain a fit note, do not be concerned if it looks a little different and the doctor’s signature is not on there.

Another change you may not be aware of, that came into effect at the beginning of July 2022, is the fact that other medical professionals, other than your GP, can now write out a Fit Note. As this will impact on our sickness absence reporting procedure, I am writing to make you aware of the changes.

*Who can issue a fit note from 1 July 2022?*

Up until 1 July 2022, it has been the case that only a doctor could issue a fit note (otherwise known as a “statement of fitness to work”) after they have seen or spoken to you and assessed your fitness to work. From this date, the list of medical professionals from which you can obtain a fit note is being significantly extended.

From 1 July 2022, the law will change to allow the following medical professionals to issue fit notes:

* nurses;
* occupational therapists;
* pharmacists; and
* physiotherapists.

These healthcare professionals will be able to issue fit notes following an assessment of an individual's fitness for work (a fit note cannot be issued without an assessment).

*What will you need to do?*

In terms of the process you follow when you feel unwell, you can still, as normal, go to your doctor/GP for a fit note. However, should you prefer not to, or should you be able to obtain an appointment sooner with one of the above-named medical professionals, then they too can assess your fitness to work, and if necessary issue a fit note declaring you either unfit for work, or fit with certain adjustments. These notes will be treated in the same way as one provided by a doctor/GP.

*What is not changing?*

You should continue to follow the absence reporting procedure which can be found in our Employee Handbook/Intranet/ list here where it can be found. This means that for the first seven calendar days, you may self-certify your absence. For sickness absences of more than seven days, you will need to provide a fit note.

This last paragraph is optional, if return to work meetings are held as a matter of course.

As usual, on your return to work, a meeting will be held with you to discuss your sickness absence and the medical advice you sought and obtained.

Should you have any questions as to the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me by.

Yours sincerely,

*[Insert name]*

*[Insert job title]*