



## **CAFCASS REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL REPORTS**

### **Guidance for Sheffield GPs**

Following extensive negotiations with the national and local offices of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), the LMC is pleased to confirm that clarification has been received with regard to Cafcass requests for medical reports as follows:

- Private law requires medical reports in the extreme and usually from a specialist medical practitioner. Payment for medical reports in private law cases must be made by the requiring party unless the party is legally aided and the legal aid certificate covers such a report.
- Requests for medical reports from GPs will only be in line with a court order and appropriate to the case. This is normal practice within public court proceedings.
- Where the GP is requested to provide a report under a court order, the General Practitioners Committee (GPC) has confirmed the arrangement for payments of fees as follows:

Where the Court Welfare Officer forms the opinion that a medical report is appropriate, leave of the court should always be sought before such a report is commissioned. In these circumstances, the Welfare Officer should ensure that a direction is obtained as to which party is responsible for payment either personally or through the legal aid certificate.

The LMC office would be interested to hear of any requests outside of this guidance.