

New “Fit Note” unveiled by the Government.

The Government has unveiled details of its new medical 'Fit Note' which is intended to replace the MED3 doctor's certificate or 'sick note'. The aim is to help more people stay in work or to return to work sooner rather than drift into long-term sickness.

There will a 12-week consultation on the design of the Fit Note. Developed with the support of healthcare professionals, employer representatives and trade unions, it is intended that the new Fit Note will roll-out across Great Britain in spring 2010. The goal is that the Fit Note will be computer-generated in GPs surgeries, replacing the current hand written version. Rather than just having a 'fit/unfit' to work choice, the Fit Note will contain suggestions as to how an individual can be eased back into work.

About 172 million working days were lost in 2007 due to sickness absence and absences that last over four weeks make up around 40% of days lost due to sickness absence.

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