

Why is your own doctor not authorised to issue a medical certificate?

Your doctor has informed you that he or she cannot issue a 'medical certificate' (also known as a doctor's certificate). This is correct. In doing so, your doctor acted in accordance with the rules issued by the Royal Dutch Medical Association (KNMG), the professional organisation for physicians.

Why can't your doctor issue a 'medical certificate'?

A medical certificate is a written declaration that provides an assessment of you as a patient and your (medical) suitability or unsuitability for performing certain tasks. Examples include being able to work, drive a car, go to school, look after your children properly, travel or be entitled to a parking permit or adapted housing.

Only issued by an independent doctor

These medical certificates may only be issued by an independent doctor, i.e. not your 'own' doctor. This independent doctor can reach their own opinion of your situation. If you give your consent, this doctor may also ask your own doctor(s) for extra information.

Why is this?

Your own doctor needs to be able to concentrate on your treatment. In order to do so, it is important to have a good relationship of trust with you. This relationship of trust may be adversely affected if your own doctor states an opinion that is unfavourable for you. It is necessary to avoid situations in which you and your doctor enter into conflict as a result. There must therefore be a clear boundary between the treatment and the assessment of whether you are eligible for certain facilities or services. This means that nothing will prevent you from giving your own doctor all the information required for your treatment.

It also benefits you if the examination is conducted by a doctor who is familiar with the specific requirements for the allocation of the facility or service you are requesting. Your own doctor does not have all the knowledge required. This also makes it impossible for your own doctor to make a valid assessment.

How can you obtain a medical certificate?

1. You can check with the body that requires the medical certificate whether it is sufficient for you to provide your own statement about your state of health, possibly in the form of a questionnaire that you can complete yourself.
2. You can ask your own doctor to issue a copy of a specific part of your medical record that includes certain important facts about your state of health. For example, this may include the results of a walking test or vision test, etc. You can then send this to the body requesting a medical certificate.
3. If an assessment is required, you can turn to a doctor who specialises in the relevant field and who is not responsible for your treatment. This doctor may also ask your own doctor for factual information about your state of health and use this information in their assessment. This will only be possible with your consent.
4. You can ask the body that requires a medical certificate whether they can arrange an independent doctor for you.