

Conscience letter to trainer
EXAMPLE LETTER TO TRAINER

Dear Ms,

I am writing, as I believe is only right at the start of my Nursing course here in, with respect to the issue of conscientious objection whilst on placement.

Because of my chosen formulation of medical ethics, I find myself unable to cooperate with the following procedures:

1. Active termination of pregnancy where the death of the foetus is intended
2. Artificial contraception/sterilization
3. Extra-coital infertility treatments such as IVF.

My sincerely held belief is that these treatments are not good treatments in the holistic sense of patient well-being. I fully appreciate that I cannot impose my personal morality upon patients and am confident you would agree that it would be improper for the Trust or an individual patient to be permitted to impose their particular sense of morality upon me. I would therefore greatly appreciate arrangements being in place whereby I could be excused from administering procedure-related treatments to those patients in the listed groups and/or having an active part in the procedures themselves.

I fully understand, however, that I have the duty of helping patients from any of these groups where postoperative events and complications require nursing intervention.

I would like to emphasise that I am making no subjective judgement whatsoever about the patients or indeed healthcare professionals involved in the aforementioned procedures. Indeed, I feel it is crucial that my personal conscientious objections do not make patients or fellow staff feel subjectively judged, undermined or morally deficient.

I entirely appreciate my obligation to be fully informed from an educational perspective about the procedures I object to and would aim to attend all the required theoretical learning sessions.

I have enquired to ensure that my conscientious stance is in accord with NMC published Code of Conduct and will abide by what the Code states. I am informing you of my conscientious objection early so alternative arrangements can be found. Similarly I am confident that my sincerely held beliefs, which are based upon scientific and religious convictions, are compatible with the rights afforded to me by the European Convention on Human Rights.

I would be very pleased however to meet with you to further discuss these issues of conscientious objection, should you so wish.

As a trainee I recognise that I am entering into an educational contract. This contract recognises that my senior colleagues take the definitive decisions regarding the best interests of the patient. Therefore I realise it is my obligation to inform my superiors at anytime when it is likely that my conscientious objection may be contrary to the sincerely held beliefs of my supervisors.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your kind consideration of this matter. I shall endeavour to be diligent and enthusiastic in the work that I do and therefore hopefully uphold the good name that the Nursing School has.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.
Yours sincerely

NOTIFICATION OF TREATMENTS NOT AVAILABLE FROM DR...AT YOUR GP PRACTICE

Dear Patient,

I am very happy to be one of the General Practitioners who provides general medical services to you.

I am writing to inform you about important information that you have a right to know.

In the UK all Doctors are expected to comply with the standards promulgated by the General Medical Council. Two important standards that the GMC insist upon are:

- A Doctor must follow his or her conscience in determining which treatments he or she believes are in the best interests of the patient
- A Doctor must not object to a treatment based upon lifestyle for example married versus unmarried or homosexual sexual activity versus heterosexual sexual activity

I sincerely believe that the following treatments are not in the best interests of the patient:

- Abortion
- Artificial contraception
- Conception of children separated from an act of sexual intercourse

I also believe that there is overwhelming scientific evidence for human flourishing to support the following lifestyle options:

- That the best interests of children and society are served by encouraging the lifestyle option of conception and rearing of children within a lifelong heterosexual marriage
- Sexual intercourse is in the best interests of the individual and society within the lifestyle option of a lifelong heterosexual marriage

I recognize that I cannot impose my morality upon any patient.

Therefore in a sincere attempt to satisfy the GMC guiding principles I am writing to inform you that I will not prescribe the following treatments for all patients independent of lifestyle:

- Treatments resulting in direct termination of pregnancy (abortion)
- Treatments resulting in intentional contraception (e.g. contraceptive pill)
- Treatments intended to conceive children separated from sexual intercourse (e.g. IVF)
- Treatments that ameliorate erectile dysfunction where the treatment is provided to facilitate sexual intercourse (e.g. Viagra)

Despite my desire for example to offer infertility services to married couples it is impossible for me to treat specific groups of patients and remain an NHS employee.

This information will permit you the option of seeking an opinion from another Doctor of your choice if you so wish.

One of the great things about our country is that whilst we may have different opinions as to what is best we can all respect each other. I have the greatest respect for individuals who do not agree with my sincerely held beliefs. If you would like to discuss any matter arising from this letter or if you do not understand it please make an appointment to see me either alone or with a person of your choice.

This notification has been scrutinized by the Standards and Ethics Section of the General Medical Council and has been judged compliant with their guidelines for best practice.

The provision of your general medical care continues to be my privilege to provide you with if you so wish.

Yours Sincerely,

PATIENT NOTICE PLEASE NOTE

**FOR REASONS OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION AND/OR
RESPECT FOR THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCILS ATTEMPTS
TO REGULATE DOCTORS IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY DR X
DOES NOT PROVIDE.....**

**YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO CONSULT ANOTHER DOCTOR OF
YOUR CHOICE**

TRAINEE DOCTOR AND THE PATIENT AND CONSCIENCE.....

PATIENT "I WOULD LIKE A TOP/PILL/COIL ETC

YOUR ANSWER (KEY THING IS NOT TO REFER FOR THE TOP ETC, YOU REFER AS PART OF YOUR EDUCATIONAL CONTRACT OBLIGATION TO INFORM YOUR TRAINER ABOUT YOUR CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION. YOUR TRAINER DECIDES WHAT HE/SHE WILL DO)

THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN IMPORTANT DECISION IN YOUR LIFE.

I MUST BE HONEST WITH YOU THAT I AM A DOCTOR WHO HAS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION TO PROVIDING THIS TREATMENT FOR YOU.

I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT IT IS NOT IN YOUR BEST LONGTERM INTERESTS.

I AM A TRAINEE DOCTOR WHO HAS AGREED TO INFORM MY TRAINER ANYTIME MY CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION IS INVOKED.

I WILL INFORM THE SENIOR DOCTOR IN THE PRACTISE WHO IS MY TRAINER THAT I HAVE A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION AND HE/SHE WILL SEE YOU.