



Circular 029/20

30th October 2020

Re: Prescription Charges and Drugs Payment Scheme

Dear Pharmacist,

I wish to advise you that the Minister for Health, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, has made regulations cited to decrease the prescription charge for prescribed drugs, medicines and appliances reimbursed under the GMS Scheme effective from 1st November 2020 (S.I. 464 and 465 of 2020)

The Minister has also made regulations cited as Health Services (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 463) to decrease the threshold for prescription medicines under the Drug Payment Scheme effective from 1st November 2020.

Prescription Charges

Over 70s:

A decrease in the prescription charge for Over 70s and their dependents from €1.50 per item to €1.00 per item for prescribed drugs, medicines and appliances reimbursed under the GMS scheme will come into effect from 1st November 2020. The monthly cap for Over 70s prescription charges has also decreased from €15.00 to €10.00 per person or family.

Those Under 70:

A decrease in the prescription charge for those Under 70 and their dependents from €2.00 per item to €1.50 per item for prescribed drugs, medicines and appliances reimbursed under the GMS scheme will come into effect from 1st November 2020. The monthly cap has also decreased from €20.00 to €15.00 per person or family.

A prescription charge will also apply for clients accessing products:

- Using Hospital Emergency Prescriptions
- Using Dental Prescriptions under the Dental Treatment Scheme
- Under the EEA Scheme
- Under discretionary hardship arrangements
- Under the Infectious Diseases Regulations (TB Drugs)

The status of a patient's Prescription Charge can be checked using the Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) secure checker available on your Pharmacy Application Suite.

Families can confirm or establish a family group on www.medicalcard.ie. If they do not have access to the internet they can get assistance from their Community Healthcare Organisation or call 1890 252 919.

Alternatively, I would be grateful if you could assist eligible families in this regard.

Drugs Payment Scheme

A decrease in the threshold from €124.00 to €114.00 for prescription medicines under the Drug Payment Scheme will also come into effect from 1st November 2020. No individual or family will have to pay more than €114.00 in any calendar month for approved drugs, medicines and appliances for use by that person or his/her family in that month.

Application forms are available from Community Health Organisations or on www.hse.ie. Alternatively, pharmacists can assist eligible families by completing the emergency registration process.

Yours sincerely,

Shaun Flanagan
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service