



Primary Care Reimbursement
Service

Duncan Smith, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

6th October, 2020

PQ: 2581420

To ask the Minister for Health if a review of medical card eligibility had been launched; the number of medical cards under review; the number of cards that have been extended following the review; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Duncan Smith

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 25814/20), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Medical Card eligibility is generally issued for a fixed period of time. Before the cards are due to expire, a review is carried out to determine if the card holder is still eligible. Most Medical Cards are awarded for 3 years. Where it is determined that a full review is not warranted, eligibility may be extended and a new card issued with a new expiry date. Otherwise the client has to return a renewal form which will be sent out three months prior to the expiry date on their card.

During 2019, 671,361 cards were due to expire in monthly tranches, both Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards. These were subject to a risk analysis to determine the review approach to adopt. Information supplied by Revenue and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection informs the process while the processing capacity within PCERS is also taken into account. In 2019, renewal notices issued in relation to 267,729 cards. Of the renewals issued, 71% retained their cards, 2% were deceased and 27% were not renewed.

Apart from cards expiring, a certain number of targeted reviews are carried out where circumstances may have changed due to the person returning to work, for example. In 2019, 33,473 targeted reviews were carried out of which 51% retained their eligibility. Confirmation of residency letters are also sent

out and of 81,499 people who received a letter in 2019, 72% confirmed their residency and retained their card.

2020 has been an exceptional year with reviews suspended for 6 months from March to August, monthly reviews have resumed since Sept. albeit that less reviews have been sent out as anyone on Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) is not being reviewed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Doyle', written over a thin horizontal line.

Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service