



Richard Boyd Barrett, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

24th March, 2021

PQ: 12672/21

To ask the Minister for Health the reason the drug semaglutide has been removed from the drugs payment scheme for use by polycystic ovary syndrome patients; his plans to reinstate it; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Richard Boyd Barrett.

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 12672/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Medicines are added to the formal Reimbursement List following detailed assessments which include assessment of the clinical evidence, the economic evidence and the budget impact of a decision to reimburse specific indications of a medicine. The Primary Care Reimbursement Service is required to reimburse in line with approved decisions of the HSE and the HSE is required to formally assess each medicine and each specific use of such medicines before reimbursing them.

Semaglutide marketed as Ozempic[®] was approved by the HSE for addition to the Reimbursement List for the treatment of Diabetes in 2018. Diabetes is one of the Long Term Illness (LTI) conditions for which eligible LTI persons can access their medicines to treat their Diabetes free of charge. Semaglutide has not been approved for reimbursement for any other indication.

Controls are in place within the Primary Care Reimbursement Service scheme management systems (and are put in place and updated as required) on claiming processes to ensure that only HSE approved indications are reimbursed across a range of medicines. Controls are currently in place in relation to both Liraglutide

(Victoza®) and Semaglutide (Ozempic®) to restrict reimbursement support to the HSE approved indication of Diabetes. Persons with Diabetes are eligible for the Long Term Illness Scheme and may access Liraglutide and Semaglutide via that eligibility. Therefore, neither medicine is made available on the Drugs Payment Scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to the status of Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards applications, which the Deputy / Senator may wish to use for an earlier response. Tel: 01-8647180 / email: Oireachtas.pcrs@hse.ie