



Jackie Cahill, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

5th April 2022

PQ: 18385/22

To ask the Minister for Health if there is a scheme in place to help persons on social welfare who suffer from gluten-related dietary restrictions with the cost of coeliac friendly foods; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cahill,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 18385/22), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

There is no current HSE scheme to supplement the cost for existing, or newly diagnosed patients with coeliac disease requiring gluten free diets to supplement the cost of the diet. Such products were discontinued under the statutory schemes in 2012.

Historically there was a scheme (Department of Social protection) called the 'Diet Supplement' payment which was a payment to help with the cost of a special diet prescribed by your doctor or hospital consultant. The Diet Supplement was discontinued for new applicants from 1 February 2014. People who were getting Diet Supplement before 1 February 2014 were permitted to keep the payment for as long as they continue to be entitled to the payment (Info as per <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/1d4b07-dietary-supplement/>)

A person can claim relief for certain food products if they have specific dietary requirements due to a medical condition. This applies to persons with coeliac disease where they require gluten free foods specifically manufactured to be gluten free. Details of this scheme are available at <https://www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions/health-and-age/health-expenses/additional-diet-expenses-for-coeliacs-and-diabetics.aspx>.

It should be noted that the marketplace has evolved whereby such products are widely available in supermarkets at a more reasonable price than was historically costed to the State when they were available in pharmacies through the statutory schemes and without incurring the further extra costs of a dispensing fee.

Yours sincerely,

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

Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service