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Robert O'Donoghue, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

15th May 2025

PQ: 21164/25

To ask the Minister for Health if her Department will revise the current means testing system for medical cards to formally include the "cost of disability" as an allowable expense category in determining eligibility for the medical card. -Robert O'Donoghue

Dear Deputy O'Donoghue,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 21164/25), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Please be advised that Medical Card and GP Visit Card eligibility is based on a family unit assessment through the completion of a Medical Card and GP Visit Card application. As per National Assessment Guidelines a family is defined as an adult, their spouse or partner and any of their child dependents. In addition please note that Medical Card eligibility is primarily based on an assessment of means and is not granted on the basis of any particular condition, of itself, (except in limited cases: e.g. persons affected by drug Thalidomide; Symphysiotomy survivors etc.).

Moreover please note, in cases where a family is deemed over the financial threshold for a Medical Card and a Medical Report is included with an application the HSE still has discretion to forward such an application to a Medical Officer for discretionary review. As part of this review the Medical Officer will advise whether the medical circumstances indicated on an application will cause a family unnecessary financial hardship. The application will then be fully reviewed by a Deciding Officer.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care 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