



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,  
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

Seomra 243, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,  
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18<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Deputy O'Hara,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 4456/25 To ask the Minister for Health the changes that have been made to the system of reimbursing dispensing opticians for vouchers issued by the HSE for glasses for children; if she will provide a list of type of payments available for each type of glasses or prescription; the rules that apply; up to what age payments are made; and if she will make a statement on the matter.**

**-Louis O'Hara**

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Dear Deputy O'Hara,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 4456/25) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The Community Ophthalmic Services Scheme (COSS) scheme provides for the dispensing of spectacles and optical devices by optometrists and opticians prescribed by ophthalmologists to children. The HSE continues to reimburse dispensing opticians/optometrists via the Primary Care Reimbursement Service for spectacles and optical devices prescribed by ophthalmologists to children (up to age 12). Each child is entitled to the supply of one pair of contract spectacles every two years from the date of initial prescription or change of prescription. In the case of breakages or loss, a maximum of two additional pairs of spectacles may be provided within 12 months from the date of the initial prescription or the date of the last prescription change.

Teenagers aged 12-16 years who are dependants of Medical Card Holders or who are medical card holders in their own right are entitled to an eye examination and spectacles once every two years if required. In the case of loss or damage, one additional pair may be provided free of charge in any period of 12 months.

In addition to the above, the Regional Health Areas are allocated budgets to fund services in their area which may contribute towards the cost of specialised lens in certain circumstances, usually as advised by an Ophthalmic Consultant and based on clinical need.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

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**Seán McArt**

General Manager Primary Care  
National Community Operations