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Paul Murphy, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

21st February 2025

PQ: 4679/25

To ask the Minister for Health if the hardship scheme will be expanded to allow for forms and prescriptions from GPs to be accepted in place of those from paediatricians; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Paul Murphy

Dear Deputy Murphy,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 4679/25), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Exceptional arrangements (Discretionary Hardship Arrangements) are considered for supply of items not on Reimbursement List for those with medical card eligibility. All applications under Discretionary Hardship Arrangements are reviewed on an individual patient basis.

Under Community Drug Schemes, Exempt Medicinal Products must be Consultant initiated. However, whilst the original prescriber is a Consultant and specialist in the relevant field, the HSE will accept a GP prescription further to the initial hospital prescription for approved patients.

The HSE is satisfied that all requirements can be ordinarily met through the Reimbursement List maintained in compliance with the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act, 2013. There are however a number of situations where the HSE will approve applications under Discretionary Hardship Arrangements supported by a GP prescription, for example;

- a. Liquid line extensions of products already on the Reimbursement List can be submitted for Hardship approval supported by a GP prescription e.g. liquid formulations of omeprazole for peg feed children.

- b. Where a shortage of a product on the Reimbursement List occurs. In these circumstances, a GP prescription for the Exempt Medicinal Product to provide continuity of supply for the patient will be accepted by the local office.
- c. Palliative Care/ End of Life
- d. Giving sets and ancillaries

I hope this clarifies the matter.

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