



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Seirbhís Aisíocaíochta Cúraim Phríomhúil
Bealach amach 5, M50, An Bóthar Thuaidh, Fionnghlas
Baile Átha Cliath 11, D11 XKF3
Fón: (01) 864 7100 Facs: (01) 834 3589

Health Service Executive, Primary Care Reimbursement Service
Exit 5, M50, North Road, Finglas,
Dublin 11, D11 XKF3
Tel: (01) 864 7100 Fax: (01) 834 3589

Louis O'Hara, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

27th May 2025

PQ: 24895/25

To ask the Minister for Health whether the cost of blood tests ordered and carried out by a GP are covered by the medical card scheme; if there are specific types of blood tests ordered by GPs which are not covered by the medical card scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Louis O'Hara

Dear Deputy O'Hara,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 24895/25), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Under the terms of the current agreement, GPs are required to provide eligible patients with "all proper and necessary treatment of a kind usually undertaken by a general practitioner and not requiring special skill or experience of a degree or kind which general practitioners cannot reasonably be expected to possess".

Routine blood tests, which are deemed clinically necessary by the patient's GP are comprehended by this scope of service. It is of course a matter for the treating GP to determine in the case of each individual patient what is proper and necessary care. In circumstances where a GP, in the exercise of his/her clinical judgement, determines that a particular treatment or service requested by a patient is not clinically necessary but the patient still wishes to receive same, it is at the GPs discretion as to whether he/she imposes a charge for providing the service/treatment in question. An example of this might be an asymptomatic patient about whom the GP does not have any clinical concerns requesting a general health screening.

Consultation fees charged by GPs outside the terms of the GMS contracts are a matter of private contract between the clinicians and their patients.

The HSE does not have any role in relation to the regulation of such fees.

The role of the Primary Care team, within each CHO, is to investigate, in the first instance, the validity of any claim that a person with eligibility makes regarding charges inappropriately levied by their GP of choice for blood tests undertaken at the GP's practice - *'as part of proper and necessary treatment of a kind usually undertaken by a general practitioner and not requiring special skill or experience of a degree or kind which general practitioners cannot reasonably be expected to possess'*

The role of the PCRS is to act appropriately on the basis of the recommendations made by the local health manager to:

- make a refund to the complainant
- make a corresponding deduction from the regular payments to the GP in question.

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