

HSE-Medicines Management Programme (MMP)

MMP roadmap for the identification of preferred high-protein oral nutritional supplement(s)

The HSE-Medicines Management Programme (MMP) provides sustained national leadership in relation to safe, effective and cost-effective prescribing. Oral nutritional supplements (ONS) are available under the Community Drug Schemes (CDS), as they are included on the Health Service Executive-Primary Care Reimbursement Service (HSE-PCRS) list of reimbursable items.

For ONS to be included on the list of reimbursable items, they must satisfy the criteria as outlined in the *HSE-PCRS Clinical Nutritional Products Guidelines for Manufacturers/Distributors/Suppliers*, at the time of their application. This process is underpinned by the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013.

HSE-Primary Care and MMP have previously published a *Standard ONS First-line Prescribing List for Adults Living in the Community*. On 1st July 2019, changes to the reimbursement of standard ONS on the CDS were introduced in line with the Prescribing List. High-protein ONS were outside the scope of this process.

According to MMP analysis, there has been an increase in utilisation of and total expenditureⁱ on high-protein ONS on the CDS over the last 4.5 years. The estimated total monthly expenditure increased from approximately €0.49 million in July 2019 to approximately €1.39 million in December 2023. The number of patients in receipt of high-protein ONS on a monthly basis increased from approximately 6,200 to approximately 16,500 over the same time period.

Evaluation Process

The MMP will undertake an evaluation to identify preferred high-protein ONS. Following the review, measures will be implemented to ensure appropriate and cost-effective prescribing of high-protein ONS.

A number of criteria relevant to high-protein ONS may be considered by the MMP in identifying the preferred high-protein ONS, including:

1. Reimbursement cost of the ONS
2. Nutritional content of the ONS
3. Robustness of supply to the Irish market
4. Patient factors
5. Any other relevant factors

Work Plan

The MMP will commence work on the identification of the preferred high-protein ONS using the process as outlined in this roadmap. This involves a consultation period where submissions are invited from all relevant stakeholders, including the suppliers of high-protein ONS. This process will include ONS with a high-protein content, which are not currently included on [List A](#) or [List B](#) Standard ONS. Products on the HSE-PCRS list of reimbursable items, or those that are the subject of an application for addition to the list of reimbursable items submitted to the HSE by close of business on 6th February 2024 will be considered in the review. In addition, the high-protein ONS must be available for supply to the Irish market.

ⁱ Total expenditure includes ingredient cost and pharmacy fee, based on claims submitted by pharmacists.

Submissions can be emailed to mmp@hse.ie. Alternatively, the MMP can provide access to a secure file transfer system for submissions; please contact the MMP for further details. The MMP will issue confirmation of receipt of submission within 72 hours. Please contact the MMP if you do not receive confirmation of receipt after this time.

The consultation period will open on 7th February 2024. The closing date for submissions is 9th April 2024 at 1pm.

Following consideration of submissions and internal review, the MMP will publish a recommendation in relation to high-protein ONS. The MMP will then engage with all stakeholders to introduce measures to support the implementation of the recommendation.

References

1. HSE-Medicines Management Programme (MMP). Oral nutritional supplements. Available: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/medicines-management/oral-nutritional-supplements/>
2. HSE-Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) list of reimbursable items. Available: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/pcrs/items/>
3. HSE-Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) database analysis – Utilisation and total expenditure on high-protein ONS. On file.
4. HSE-Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) Clinical Nutritional Products. Guidelines for Manufacturers/ Distributors/ Suppliers V3 December 2023. Available: <https://www2.healthservice.hse.ie/organisation/national-pppgs/hse-primary-care-reimbursement-service-pcrs-clinical-nutritional-products-reimbursement-guidelines-for-manufacturersdistributors/>