



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Seirbhís Aisíoca Príomhchúraim  
Bealach amach 5 an M50  
An Bóthar Thuaidh  
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Baile Átha Cliath 11

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Circular 011/11

Dear Doctor,

The HSE has been receiving complaints from the general public in recent weeks, the nature of which would indicate that some GMS contract holding General Practitioners are charging their medical card/GP visit card patients for routine phlebotomy services where the samples are taken in the GP's practice as part of the investigation and necessary treatment of patients' symptoms or conditions.

In the interest of clarification on this matter I wish to advise that where the practice based phlebotomy service forms part of the investigation and necessary treatment of a patient's symptoms or conditions by the patient's GP, the service should be provided free of charge where the patient is a medical card or GP visit card holder.

Any proven instances of eligible patients, who by definition are deemed to be unable to arrange general practitioner services for themselves and their dependants, without incurring undue hardship, being requested to pay for a routine service of this nature from their own limited resources would be viewed as a serious matter by the HSE.

I wish to point out therefore that if the HSE is made aware of specific cases where GMS patients are being charged for this service by GP contractors, it will arrange to have such cases investigated as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Burke  
Assistant National Director  
Primary Care Reimbursement Service