



Circular 014/25

18th September 2025

High tech prescription validity and reference pricing

Dear Pharmacist,

I refer to Circular 008/24 and the legislative changes to prescription validity and extension that were introduced in March 2024. Recent communications from hospital prescribers have indicated that patients are being directed back to the Hospital Consultant or their team for further High Tech prescriptions where current prescriptions remain valid.

Please note that if the hospital clinician wishes to prescribe **up to 12 months** of a High Tech medicine in accordance with prescription legislation, this is acceptable under High Tech Arrangements. The High Tech Hub was updated to facilitate prescribers to issue High Tech prescription forms up to 12 months in duration.

However, pharmacists are not currently in a position to extend High Tech prescriptions beyond the duration the prescriber has indicated on the prescription. Due to clinical follow-up required within the hospital setting for these types of high cost medicines, pharmacists will not be in a position to extend High Tech prescriptions until detailed engagements with clinical experts around the risks and benefits are undertaken. This is to ensure that patients continue to attend their hospital appointments within the required timeframe and are carefully monitored to ensure therapeutic benefit and patient safety.

Consultation with appropriate clinical programmes may over time identify clinical areas within the High Tech medication space that could be considered appropriate for pharmacist extension. In the interim, hospital prescribers are permitted to prescribe up to 12 months of a High Tech medicine and pharmacists can dispense in accordance with the duration specified on the prescription but not extend. Please note for High Tech reimbursement purposes a valid in date prescription is required.

As you are aware under the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013, the HSE will reimburse the notified reference price for the relevant interchangeable products communicated to pharmacists through circular unless informed by the pharmacist that the prescriber has stated 'Do Not Substitute' on the prescription presented for dispensing for any of the products in interchangeable groups. This also refers to medication ordered under the High Tech Arrangement. It is important to note if an order is placed for a High Tech product not meeting the notified reference price, which does not have 'Do Not Substitute' invoked on the prescription, the co-payment amount will be deducted from the pharmacy's next PCRS payment.

Should you have any queries the support team in the High Tech Co-Ordination Unit can be contacted by email at pcrs.hitech@hse.ie or by phone on 01 864 7135.

Yours faithfully,

Shaun Flanagan,
Primary Care Reimbursement Service