



23 July 2020

Circular 21/20

### **Update to COVID 19 Administrative Arrangements**

Dear Pharmacist,

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation during these past challenging times.

I refer to Circular 10/20 and the exceptional arrangements put in place at that time. While some of the arrangements will continue for the next three months, there are others which will come to an end shortly.

#### **Discretionary Hardship Arrangements**

You will already have received an update on Discretionary Hardship Arrangements (Circular 20/20). Applications that were due to expire have been extended for three months. Therefore:

- Applications that were due to expire in April have been extended until the end of July
- those that were due to expire in May will be extended until the end of August and
- those that were due to expire in June will now expire at the end of September.

#### **Patient Specific Approvals**

Phased Dispensing approvals that were extended until the end of June will now require your attention to refresh their approval status. ONS approvals will now require the Doctor or Dietician to apply for reapproval.

PrEP approvals have been further extended until the end of October as the specialised clinics will not be operating to full capacity for a further period due to the requirement for social distancing at Outpatient Clinics.

#### **Hydroxychloroquine Notifications**

Stock of this preparation is no longer a concern. Therefore, there is no longer a requirement to seek prior approval before dispensing the product to 'de novo' patients at your pharmacy.

#### **Supply under the GMS and Community Drugs Schemes**

While it is important to remain cognisant as per Circular 8/20 of the requirements of the Community Drugs Schemes (one month's supply per calendar month); where a patient is not using the GMS / Community Drugs Schemes for their medicine needs, more than one month can be supplied where

- a) no patient safety issues or misuse issues arise,
- b) Stock concerns in respect of the particular products do not arise

## Supporting Documentation

You are asked not to submit further supporting documentation except where manual claims arise. Some contractors are choosing to forward multiple months at a time in a non -segregated manner. You are asked to retain all such supporting documentation in your pharmacy for the time being for audit purposes.

## Enhanced Query System

I am pleased to notify you of the latest enhancement to the Pharmacy Application Suite. A new Pharmacy Claim Enquiry tool is now available under the 'Claiming' tab and provides a search function to retrieve specific Claim, Form or Patient detail for claims which have been submitted by your pharmacy within the previous 6 months.

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Username: \_\_\_\_\_

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Reporting  
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Claims presented for payment with incomplete data will also report on the Pharmacy Claim Enquiry tab along with the reason for non payment. Please note Hardship or Opioid Substitution claims are not available for review at this time.

We are aware that pharmacies are beginning to increase their opening hours to Pre - COVID levels and would like to assure you that we are satisfied to retain shorter hours as appropriate for your team's capacity to deliver safe services.

Yours faithfully,

Shaun Flanagan  
Primary Care Eligibility and Reimbursement