



17th May 2019

Circular 019/19

Re: Long-Term Illness Scheme Centralisation

Dear Pharmacist,

I refer to previous communications in relation to the Long Term Illness (LTI) Scheme, and in particular Circular 014/19. I wish to advise that from 1st June 2019, PCRS will assume governance for the processing of all new and review LTI applications. Please find enclosed copies of the updated application forms for use in your practice. Please remove all old application forms and dispose of them as they will not be accepted by PCRS in future.

Pharmacists will have the facility to express register LTI applications where the medications prescribed confirm the diagnosis. This online application will be available on the Pharmacy Suite named 'Express LTI'.

Furthermore, Pharmacists will be able to apply for specific individual approval of products outside of the Core List(s) directly through the Secure Scheme Checker portal. These items will be pending approval prior to a reimbursement decision being communicated back to the Pharmacist through the system.

Please find attached some FAQs that have been developed to assist you with the new enhancements.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Marie Hoey
Primary Care Reimbursement & Eligibility

LTI Centralisation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

From 1st June 2019 enhancements to the LTI scheme will take place. The following information is provided to assist Pharmacists with these new developments.

To qualify, a person must be 'ordinarily resident' in the Republic of Ireland. This means that they are living here and intend to live here for at least one year. Certification by the doctor or consultant is required on the LTI application form submitted to PCRS to confirm the condition including the list of medication and appliances needed to treat the condition. Once the application is successful, the patient will be issued with an LTI card. The patient is provided seamlessly with the Core List for their prescribed illness. Patients with the following medical conditions listed should apply for eligibility under the LTI scheme immediately following diagnosis.

| Illness Code | Illnesses and Disabilities |
|--------------|---|
| A | Intellectual disability (This is described in the legislation as 'mental handicap') |
| B | Hydrocephalus |
| C | Cerebral Palsy |
| D | Muscular Dystrophy |
| E | Haemophilia |
| F | Diabetes Mellitus (does not include Gestational Diabetes) |
| G | Diabetes Insipidus |
| H | Epilepsy |
| J | Multiple Sclerosis |
| K | Parkinsonism |
| L | Cystic Fibrosis |
| M | Phenylketonuria (PKU) |
| N | Acute Leukaemia |
| P | Mental Illness – only for persons under the age of 16 years |
| Q | Spina Bifida |
| R | Thalidomide - for conditions arising from the use of this drug |

Express LTI Registration

1. How do I know if a patient has LTI eligibility?

Eligibility is confirmed by entering the LTI number or PPSN into the Secure Scheme Checker. This will provide information on the patients LTI status, including the illness code(s), link to the Core List(s) and the patient specific approved drugs.

2. A patient has presented with a prescription following a diagnosis of one of the long-term illnesses or disabilities covered by this scheme. How do they apply for eligibility under the scheme?

An application form can be downloaded from the HSE website and posted to:

Long Term Illness Scheme
Client Registration Unit
PO Box 12962
Dublin 11
D11 XKF3

Further information regarding LTI can also be accessed through www.hse.ie/lti or LoCall 1890 252 919.

There are developments underway to enable an online facility in the future.

Pharmacists will now have the facility to express register LTI applications for certain long-term illnesses where the medications prescribed confirm the diagnosis.

3. Where can I complete an express registration for my patient for the LTI scheme?

The online registration facility is available on the Pharmacy Suite named 'Express LTI'. It is important to note that this facility can only be used for those illnesses where the medications prescribed confirm the diagnosis i.e. Diabetes Mellitus, Parkinsonism, PKU, Epilepsy.

4. I have registered my patient for the LTI scheme, is the process now complete?

Once the patient has been registered, an LTI number will be provided with the confirmation of registration. Claims for approved products (Core Lists) on the Reimbursement List can be submitted under the LTI scheme using this number. All applications made can be viewed in the 'Application History' tab.

The pharmacy should advise the patient to complete the application form and submit to PCRS. They will have 2 months to complete this process. Further claims will not be paid if registration has not been completed in this timeframe.

Eligibility can be confirmed online through the Secure Scheme Checker.

5. Is there a paper copy of the express registration form that I can submit to PCRS?

No - the pharmacy express registration is online via the Pharmacy Suite only.

6. I am making an application for a patient but the system is telling me that the patient already has approval under the LTI scheme.

Before making an express application, confirm the patient eligibility through the Secure Scheme Checker. Please ensure that the illness that is being applied for is not already approved for that patient. In some instances a different diagnosis will have been made by the clinician and a separate application will be required to certify and confirm eligibility for an additional LTI condition. However, claims for Core List products for the additional illness where the medicines prescribed confirm the diagnosis can be made for a period to assist the patient while they complete the registration process.

7. Can I apply for all long-term illness and disabilities covered by the scheme?

No you can not. While there are 16 illnesses and disabilities covered by the LTI scheme, there are certain illnesses where it is clear that the medications prescribed confirm the diagnosis. Pharmacists can apply for the following under the LTI scheme;

| Illness Code | Illness Description |
|--------------|---|
| F | Diabetes Mellitus (does not include Gestational Diabetes) |
| H | Epilepsy |
| K | Parkinsonism |
| M | Phenylketonuria |

These represent the vast majority of LTI applications.

All other illnesses and disabilities cannot be applied for by the Pharmacist using the express LTI registration.

8. I noticed that new LTI patients are issued with an LTI card instead of the LTI book. Are LTI books still valid for patients?

While LTI cards will be issued going forward, LTI books will remain valid for the time being.

Individual LTI Approval (Medicines and Appliances outside of the Core List)

9. How do I know what medications and appliances the patient is entitled to?

Approved medicines and appliances can be found online at <https://www2.hse.ie/services/long-term-illness-scheme/approved-medications.html>. A link is also available to Pharmacists through the Secure Scheme Checker. These lists will be updated from time to time.

Since April 2019, the Secure Scheme Checker allows pharmacies to see the products that a patient has specific individual approval for outside of the Core List(s). These items can be claimed for seamlessly under the patient's LTI eligibility.

10. Why are certain medicines and appliances not on the Core List(s) for a particular illness?

Drugs, medicines and non-drug items reimbursable under the LTI Scheme are intended for the treatment of the primary condition. Core Lists were developed following detailed consultation with Medical Officers, HSE Pharmacists and HSE Medicines Management Programme. The HSE is satisfied that all medicines that should be necessary for the treatment of each primary LTI condition are provided on these Core Lists.

11. How do I make an application for a medication or appliance not on the Core List for the patient's illness?

The Secure Scheme Checker system will now have the facility for the pharmacist to seek reimbursement approval for a product on the Reimbursement List under LTI. This will appear on the screen as *'To request additional drugs for this patient click **here**'*.

In this facility, the Pharmacist must select the product they wish to apply for, upload a copy of the hospital prescription and any supporting documentation for consideration.

The application will remain at pending approval until a reimbursement decision has been made and communicated back to the Pharmacist through the system. Once the item has been approved it will appear in the list of LTI product specific approvals for that patient on the Secure Scheme Checker.

Where medicinal products that are not on the approved list are prescribed for the first time for a person with any of the LTI conditions, the patient should be informed that the products are not on the Core List approved under the LTI Scheme and must be paid for under the Drugs Payment Scheme where the patient does not hold medical card eligibility.

12. How long will it take for a reimbursement decision to be made?

Applications will require pharmaceutical assessment and it may take up to 3 working days (Monday to Friday, or the first working day after a weekend) before approval or non-approval will be communicated back to the pharmacy by the PCRS through the Secure Scheme Checker. While the application is under consideration, 'pending' will be displayed on the screen.

13. I tried to apply for Fampridine but it is not listed. Why is this?

Any item that has a special drug arrangement in place cannot be applied for through this mechanism. The application must be made by the prescriber through the Special Drug Request (SDR) application system. Approvals for these items can be confirmed through the Secure Scheme Checker under 'Patient Specific Arrangements'.

14. My application has not been approved. Will I be made aware of the reason?

The reason for a negative reimbursement decision will be communicated back through the system. For example; a hospital prescription is required, the medicine is not related to the treatment of the primary condition.

15. Can an appeal be submitted following a negative decision?

Yes - appeals can be submitted through an Individual Reimbursement Form to PCRS completed and signed by the hospital prescriber detailing how the medicine is used to treat the primary condition. Supporting documentation and published clinical evidence to support the use of the medicine in treating the primary condition can also be submitted with this form for consideration.

16. One of my diabetic patients was approved for a medicine outside of Core List F. However, another of my diabetic patients was not approved for the same medicine, why is this?

Applications are made on an individual patient basis. Where insufficient clinical information is provided to enable a positive reimbursement decision, an application will not be approved. It must be clear that the medicine requested is treating the primary LTI condition.

The Core Lists were developed and published on the HSE website to provide transparency. Prior to the publication of the Core Lists in 2014, patients were approved for products on an individual basis via the Local Health Office. Patients continue to hold historical approvals for products where recent active claims were submitted to PCRS for payment.