

# ***High Tech Health Identifier***

## ***Frequenting Asked Questions***

### **1. What information do I need to ensure the HSE process claims under the High Tech Arrangement?**

In order to process prescriptions, PCRS must validate the eligibility/validity of a person or claim. The optimal method of ensuring the service is being delivered to an eligible person is through validating that service to the person by utilising a Health Card Number or PPS number.

As such, when a person is being prescribed high tech medication, it will be necessary for you to acquire one of the following:

- a. Medical Card Number
- b. Drugs Payment Scheme Number
- c. Long Term Illness Number
- d. GP Visit Card Number
- e. PPS Number\*

\*If your patient does not have any of the Health Card Numbers listed above please capture their PPS Number as their Community Pharmacist will be able to apply, on their behalf, for Drug Payment Scheme eligibility on a temporary basis. Please advise your patient to apply for eligibility under the Scheme.

Patients should be encouraged to have their relevant document/card listed above to hand at their initial appointment (see [www.myDPS.ie](http://www.myDPS.ie) for further details).

### **2. Am I entitled to collect a PPS number?**

As a prescriber, you are accessing the PPS number as an agent of the HSE for the purpose of providing the service and are entitled to seek this access under Section 262(4) of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act, 2005, as amended - 'a person shall give to a specified body his or her personal public service number and the personal public service numbers of his or her spouse and children, where relevant, as required by the body for the purposes of the person's transaction'.

### **3. What if the person is hesitant to share their PPS Number?**

The High Tech Arrangement is in place for the supply and dispensing of High Tech medicines through Community Pharmacies. The medicines are purchased by the HSE and supplied through Community Pharmacies. The cost of the medicines and patient care fees are paid by HSE on behalf of eligible persons who are ordinarily resident in the State. Those availing of the Arrangement should hold a Health Card Number. Your PPS Number is being used to search for your Health Card Number and to ensure you are eligible to receive the medication free of charge or at the price of the DPS co-payment as applicable. Alternatively patients can opt to proceed privately and pay for the medication.

### **4. How do I get a Health Card Number?**

Anyone who is 'ordinarily resident' in the Republic of Ireland can apply for a medical card or GP visit card. This includes families, single people, even those working full or part-time. 'Ordinarily resident' means that you are living here and intend to live here for at least one

year. Further details are available on [www.medicalcard.ie](http://www.medicalcard.ie). Those who are ordinarily resident and do not qualify for a medical card or GP visit card may avail of a Drugs Payment Scheme card. Further details are available on [www.mydps.ie](http://www.mydps.ie).

**5. Will PPSN data be held securely?**

The HSE is an entity specifically mandated to maintain patient records. PPS Numbers are an integral part of the controls built into the HSE Primary Care Reimbursement Service procedures. PCRS have stringent controls, policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of all information.

**6. Will data be held securely?**

The HSE PCRS protects the security of sensitive personal data captured and held. They have a published privacy statement which sets out how they collect and use personal information and what it is used for, and how information is held securely to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of information. The privacy statement is available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/pcrs/privacy-statement-august-2018.pdf>

**7. Other than reimbursement process is there any other reason why you need PPSN data?**

In the event that there is a recall or other safety concern with the drugs being used, the only central reliable method of identifying all patients who have received drugs under the High Tech Arrangement is via PCRS. This further ensures the safety of the patient.

**8. Does recent General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) allow provision of PPSN?**

Article 6 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) sets out the 'Lawfulness of processing' of personal data, which includes inter alia:

*'1 (e) processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller'*

The use of and the retention of an eligible person's PPSN is a prerequisite in the provision of medical and surgical service to that person to ensure they are eligible for such services.

**9. Does the prescriber need to acquire the individual's consent to process their data?**

The legislation distinguishes between 'sensitive' and 'non-sensitive' data. Health data is regarded as sensitive and as such information may be shared where it is necessary for medical purposes and is undertaken by a medical professional. It is not necessary to seek or acquire the individual's consent to process their data. However it is good practice that a service user is informed of the use of their data. This is contained in the PCRS Privacy Statement <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/pcrs/privacy-statement-august-2018.pdf>.

It is important that data controls are in place within all clinics and hospitals to protect the sensitivity of the data. All information should be held securely and sharing of information should be on a strict 'need to know' basis between staff involved in a service user's care.