



Primary Care Reimbursement Service
Exit 5, M50, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11,
D11 XKF3

Patricia Ryan, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

12th August, 2020

PQ: 18732/20

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated cost in a full year if prescription charges were abolished for medical card holders over 70 years of age; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Patricia Ryan

Dear Deputy Ryan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 18732/20), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service (PCERS) does not routinely collate data on Prescription Charge Income, segregated by age cohorts.

As an indicative guide only, the following analysis may be of assistance in estimating the cost to the exchequer of abolishing prescription charges for persons aged 70 years and older (and their dependants) that have Medical Card eligibility:

- The 2019 reduction in Prescription Charge Income from €2.00 to €1.50 for an Over 70 and their dependants has resulted in an additional cost to the State of approx. €850,000 per month.
- The average dispensing levels are increasing for this cohort which may increase the cost to the State for this Cohort but excluding any impact resulting from increased eligibilities as a result of COVID-19, using the impact of the 2019 reduction as a guide, the estimated abolishment of prescription charges for Over 70's and their dependants would be in excess of €2.55m per month or in excess of €30.6m per annum.

Please see the following attachment which provides a summary of changes to the Prescription Charge Income policy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kieran Healy', written over a horizontal line.

Kieran Healy
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service

Ecl.