



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Seirbhís Aisíocaíochta Cúraim Phríomhúil
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Health Service Executive, Primary Care Reimbursement Service
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Francis Noel Duffy, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

21st November 2024

PQ: 43962/24

To ask the Minister for Health to outline the process for applying for the hardship scheme for medication not covered under the drugs payment scheme; if he is aware in some cases, patients have been informed by a chemist to get both a GP signature and needing a consultant's referral to get a consultant's signature; if the application process to the scheme will be simplified; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Francis Noel Duffy

Dear Deputy Duffy,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 43962/24), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

There have been no changes to the administration of the Discretionary Hardship Arrangements.

Melatonin has never been available through the formal Reimbursement List for reimbursement under Community Drug Schemes. Under the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013, products that are licensed will undergo a pricing and reimbursement approval process by the National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics (NCPE) on receipt of an application by the HSE from the Marketing Authorisation Holder.

Melatonin (Circadin®) underwent a review in 2008 and reimbursement was not recommended by the NCPE as there is currently insufficient evidence to support the reimbursement of this product under the Community Drugs Schemes.

Exceptional arrangements (Discretionary Hardship Arrangements) are considered for supply of items not on Reimbursement List. All applications for Melatonin under Discretionary Hardship Arrangements are reviewed on an individual patient basis. An individual reimbursement form is required to be completed and submitted by the prescribing consultant in all cases.

Sufficient clinical information, including therapies trialled to date should be submitted as part of the application to enable a positive recommendation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Doyle".

Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care Reimbursement Service

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to the status of Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards applications, which the Deputy / Senator may wish to use for an earlier response. Tel: 01-8647180 / email: Oireachtas.pcrs@hse.ie