



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Seirbhís Aisíocaíochta Cúraim Phríomhúil
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Neasa Hourigan, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

14th October 2024

PQ: 39006/24

To ask the Minister for Health the measures being taken to ensure those who rely on peginterferon á to manage blood cancer, among other diseases, are not losing out while its manufacturing is delayed; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Neasa Hourigan

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 39006/24), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) is responsible for co-ordinating the management of shortages of medicines on the Irish market. The HPRA has an existing Medicine Shortages Framework in place to help prevent shortages from occurring and to reduce the impact of shortages on patients by coordinating the management of potential or actual shortages as they arise. Available at <http://www.hpra.ie/homepage/about-us/publications-forms/guidance-documents/item?id=c81f0b26-9782-6eee-9b55-ff00008c97d0&t=/docs/default-source/publications-forms/guidance-documents/adv-g0020-medicines-shortages-framework-v2>.

The HPRA works with a variety of stakeholders including the HSE to respond to potential shortages and reduce the impact of shortages on patients. Shortage of Pegasys (Peginterferon-alfa-2a) Solution for injection in pre-filled syringe 135mcg and 180mcg has been reported. The supplier has stated that the recent shortage is due to an unexpected increase in demand.

Where community pharmacies are unable to access the licensed product due to supply issues, the HSE Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) have supported reimbursement of Exempt Medicinal Products (EMPs) under Community Drug Schemes where there are no suitable alternatives.

Community pharmacy contractors can contact PCRS with queries regarding reimbursement support of associated EMPs under Community Drug Schemes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read '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