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Catherine Connolly, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

1st October 2024

PQ: 36946/24

To ask the Minister for Health the total value of funding expended by his Department through its medical card scheme and other Department-funded schemes on the purchase of medications manufactured by a company (details supplied) in 2023 and to date in 2024; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Catherine Connolly

Details Supplied:

Teva

Dear Deputy Connolly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 36946/24), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE has statutory responsibility for decisions on pricing and reimbursement of medicines in accordance with the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013. The HSE is committed to providing access to as many medicines as possible, in as timely a fashion as possible, using the resources available (provided) to it and the HSE considers a range of proposals from Industry when assessing pricing and reimbursement applications. The 2013 Act enables the HSE to consider the terms of any framework agreement in place when it is making decisions in relation to pricing. The HSE robustly assesses applications to ensure available resources can be stretched as far as possible and to deliver the best value in relation to each medicine and ultimately more medicines to Irish citizens and patients.

HSE decisions on which medicines are reimbursed by the taxpayer are made on objective, scientific and economic grounds and are in line with the criteria set out under the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013. The HSE is required to consider the following criteria prior to making any decision on funding / reimbursement:

(1) The health needs of the public,

- (2) The cost-effectiveness of meeting health needs by supplying the item concerned rather than providing other health services,
- (3) The availability and suitability of items for supply or reimbursement,
- (4) The proposed costs, benefits, and risks of the item or listed item relative to therapeutically similar items or listed items provided in other health service settings and the level of certainty in relation to the evidence of those costs, benefits and risks,
- (5) The potential or actual budget impact of the item or listed item,
- (6) The clinical need for the item or listed item,
- (7) The appropriate level of clinical supervision required in relation to the item to ensure patient safety,
- (8) The efficacy (performance in trial), effectiveness (performance in real situations) and added therapeutic benefit against existing standards of treatment (how much better it treats a condition than existing therapies) and
- (9) The resources available to the HSE

Medicines are reimbursed and funded across a range of different systems e.g. in hospitals, in community services and under National Community Drug Schemes and centrally funded arrangements.

The majority of HSE medicine related expenditure is covered by Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS). In addition to making payments in relation to medicines under the General Medical Services Scheme, the Drugs Payment Scheme and the Long Term Illness Scheme, the HSE PCRS also makes payments to suppliers and manufacturers of High Tech drugs as part of the High Tech Arrangements. High Tech drugs are specialised medicines initiated in secondary care and are appropriate to be dispensed in the community setting. High Tech medicines include expensive and innovative pharmaceuticals. PCRS also facilitates direct payments to public hospitals involved in the provision of national treatment programmes such as the National Cancer Control Programme, the National Hepatitis C Treatment Programme and Multiple Sclerosis Services. This ensures that there is a single funding strategy for the use of such high cost medicines in public hospitals and that there is no variation in access to funding for these medicines across the country.

In 2023, the HSE has reimbursed €119 million across its community drug schemes and other arrangements for Teva products.

In 2024 to date, the HSE has reimbursed €62 million across its community drug schemes and other arrangements for Teva products.

Yours sincerely,



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