

Prescription Charges – Frequently Asked Questions

What are prescription Charges?

From 1st December 2013, people with Medical Cards will pay a €2.50 charge for medicines and other items that they get on prescription from pharmacies. This follows a change in the law that was announced in the 2014 Budget.

How much will I have to pay?

You will pay €2.50 for each item that is dispensed to you from a medical card prescription, up to a maximum of €25.00 per month, per person or family. Once your pharmacy knows all of your family members then you should not pay more than €25.00 per month. The HSE will continue to pay the rest of the cost of your medicine.

What do you mean by a 'Family'?

A family is you, your spouse / partner, any children under 16 years of age and any children between 16 and 21 years of age that are in full time education.

What if I or my family pays more than €25.00 in a month?

The HSE will issue refunds automatically and regularly to you based on the information received from your pharmacy. However, you can avoid refunds altogether, if you and your family visit a single pharmacy and your pharmacist knows all of your family members. You may, if you wish, apply to the HSE for a refund of the amount over €25.00.

What if my pharmacist does not know that my family members are all part of the same family?

You should set your family up as a group by logging onto: www.hse.ie/medicalcard

Print a certificate (family certificate) to give to your pharmacist. That certificate will show all of the members of your family and in that case the pharmacy should not collect charges above the monthly limit of €25.00.

What if I don't have access to the internet to get the family certificate?

If no one in your family has access to the internet you can call 1890-252-919 and we will take the details and send you the certificate. When you ring us you will need to have the Medical Card number for each member of your family.

If I do pay more than €25.00 a month for myself or my family how do I claim a refund?

The HSE will issue refunds automatically and regularly to you based on the information received from your pharmacy. However, you may if you wish, also submit a claim form. You can do this online on www.hse.ie/medicalcard and you can apply by post on a claim form. Claim forms are available on www.hse.ie/medicalcard, from your local health office or by contacting 1890-252-919.

If you need help making a claim you can contact 1890-252-919 or your Local Health Office.

Can I avoid claiming refunds?

Yes. Refund claims can be avoided if your family uses a single pharmacy in the month and if your pharmacy knows all of your family members. In this case you should pay no more than €25.00 in the month. You should set your family up as a group on www.hse.ie/medicalcard and print off a certificate (family certificate) to give to your pharmacist.

The HSE will also issue refunds automatically and regularly to you based on the information received from your pharmacy in the event you do pay more than €25.00 in the month.

Do all Medical Card holders pay the prescription charge?

There will be no prescription charge for Children in the care of the HSE who have their own Medical Card. This includes children in care, foster care, foster care with relatives and other care placements.

What about Methadone?

There will be no prescription charge for methadone supplied to a person under the Methadone Treatment Protocol. These patients will pay prescription charges for any other items received under the Medical Card Scheme.

Is the prescription charge payable if I get a Medical Card prescription from a registered Dentist or a registered Nurse?

Yes.

What if I get prescriptions under other schemes?

The prescription charge will not apply to items supplied under the Long Term Illness Scheme, The DPS (Drugs Payment Scheme) or private prescriptions. The charge does not apply to people covered by the Health (Amendment) Act 1996 Scheme.

What if I get different prescriptions on a weekly/daily basis?

You will pay the prescription charge for each item up to the maximum of €25.00 per month, per person or family.

What if my pharmacy fills my prescription at the start of the month but then gives me the medication each day/week (i.e. phased dispensing)?

You will only pay the prescription charge for the initial dispensing of the medicine/item.

What are the arrangements for the homeless?

Homeless persons not in a residential centre and with their own medical card will pay the prescription charge.

Homeless persons living in a residential setting will have the charge paid on their behalf by the provider of the accommodation

What if I am in a Nursing Home?

If you reside in a Nursing Home, either HSE or Private, the provider of the accommodation will pay the charge on your behalf.

What about High Tech products/medicines?

As the supply of High Tech Medicines operates on the basis of a patient care fee, a prescription charge will not apply.

Where can I get more information?

You can visit www.hse.ie/medicalcard or call 1890-252-919.