

CERTAIN MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER SECTION 58 OF THE HEALTH ACT 1970, ENTRY TO THE GMS SCHEME

Title: Certain Matters Relating to the Provision of Services Under Section 58 of the Health Act 1970, Entry to the GMS Scheme

Keywords: entry to the GMS Scheme, recalibration of capitation fees in respect of persons over 70, IDTS scheme, retired former temporary District Medical Officers

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Type: Circular

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From: Department of Health and Children, Ireland

To: All Health Board Chief Executive Officers

Re: Certain Matters relating to the provision of services under section 58 of the Health Act 1970, Entry to the GMS Scheme

Dear CEO

I am directed by the Minister for Health and Children to refer to a recent Agreement with the Irish Medical Organisation dealing with certain matters relating to the provision of services under section 58 of the Health Act 1970.

The matters concerned are set out below and, as appropriate, complement and supplement existing arrangements in the relevant areas from the effective date of 1 March 1999.

Entry to the GMS Scheme

1. The following provisions will apply:

(a) a general practitioner, having such qualifications as would make him or her currently eligible for entry to a GMS Scheme position and who, on 1st March 1999, is in full-time general practice in one location in the State for a period of five consecutive years or who from a time commencing before that date subsequently accumulates the five consecutive years, shall be entitled to take on

any of their patients who become eligible for a medical card for the first time on or after that date (or the date of the relevant accumulation of the five years referred to, as appropriate), and

(b) three years subsequent to the first limited entitlement referred to above, the general practitioner shall be entitled to take as medical card patients any persons holding such a card; this three year requirement will not apply in the case of bona fide partnerships which have existed for five years and the onus for demonstrating the existence of the partnership and its duration will be the responsibility of the general practitioners involved;

(c) for the purposes of clarity, the period of eight successive years referred to above (that is, the initial five years period to obtain limited entitlement and the subsequent three year period to obtain full entitlement) shall be capable of being accumulated before 1 March 1999;

(d) it will be for any general practitioner, who feels he or she meets the requirements above, to make an application in writing in that regard, to his or her relevant Health Board and to provide such information and documentation as may be required to support his or her application to the satisfaction of the Health Board;

(e) where a Health Board is satisfied that all the relevant requirements have been met, it will issue a GMS Scheme contract, and in the case of a doctor having a limited entitlement, the contract issued will contain a term that reflects the fact that for the period of limited entitlement that doctor shall not be able to take as patients any such person that already holds a medical card;

(f) for management and statistical purposes, the Health Board in issuing any contract under these arrangements shall number that contract to enable it to be identified as a contract so issued and medical card persons attending a doctor having such a contract will also be so enumerable.

2. Doctors admitted to the scheme under these arrangements will ordinarily be required to work from a single designated centre of practice, except with the approval of the Health Board.

3. The increased flexibility on Entry to the GMS Scheme now being provided for is absolutely final and all parties to the Agreement to which this circular relates have formally and fully committed themselves to further review the matter of entry to ensure that, in future, it is determined in line with the **Blueprint Document for the Future Development of General Practice**, having regard in particular to manpower and service requirements, workload and the development of partnerships.

Recalibration of Capitation Fees in respect of Persons Over 70

The existing capitation fees table will be amended in respect of the persons aged 70 and over as follows:

Distance Fee	0-3 miles	3-5 miles	5-7 miles	7-10 miles	Over 10 miles
Male	£62.67	£70.32	£81.70	£92.88	£106.77
Female	£69.90	£77.57	£88.95	£100.13	£114.03

IDTS Scheme

The IDTS Scheme figures are being reworked on an annualised age-band basis for the elderly to take account of the additional elderly persons coming into the GMS Scheme as a result of the income limit change that have been implemented, the relevant calculations will be forwarded in the near future.

Retired former temporary District Medical Officers

An ex gratia payment of £1,000 be made to former temporary District Medical Officers.

Other Matters to be Examined and Resolved

The following matters are to be examined as a matter of urgency, with a view to clarifying points of issue or resolving such difficulties as are found to exist:

- certain administrative matters (including matching of lists to payments) relating to the making of claims by GMS GPs,
- arrangements for dispensing doctors
- out of hours arrangements,
- revision of the disciplinary procedures to comply with legal opinion,
- contractual terms relevant to regulating GMS Scheme partnerships and interview procedures.

As and when any of those matters have been resolved or clarified, a further circular will issue outlining the nature of the resolution or clarification;

If you have any queries on the above, please contact the undersigned or Peter Lennon, also of this Division

Yours sincerely

Brian Mullen
GMS Division
14 April 1999