

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER SECTION 58 OF THE HEALTH ACT 1970

Title: Arrangements for the Provision of Services Under Section 58 of the Health Act. 1970.

Key Words: out of hours work, practice nurse subsidy, banding levels for allowances, fees for certain family planning procedures.

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From: Department of Health, Ireland

To: Each Health Board Chief Executive Officer

Re: Arrangements for the provision of services under Section 58 of the Health Act. 1970.

Dear CEO

I am directed by the Minister for Health to inform you that agreement has been reached with the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO) on arrangements for the provision of services under Section 58 of the Health Act, 1970, in respect of the matters set out below.

In accordance with paragraph 41 of the Schedule to the existing Form of Agreement with Registered Medical Practitioners for the Provision of Services, the terms of this agreement which are listed below shall be incorporated into existing and future contracts with effect from the date shown and shall, from that date, amend or replace any existing terms of the agreement relating to such matters as appropriate:

- (i) Out-of-Hours work;
- (ii) Practice Nurse Subsidy;
- (iii) Banding levels for allowances;
- (iv) Fees for certain Family Planning procedures.

The terms of the agreement reached in respect of the above items are set out hereunder.

TERMS AND MATTERS FOR INCORPORATION INTO EXISTING AND FUTURE CONTRACTS.

(i) Out-of-Hours Work

With effect from 1st May, 1997, an out-of-hours fee will be paid in respect of non-routine consultations necessarily carried out -

Monday to Friday: outside the hours 9am to 6pm;
Saturday: outside the hours 9a. to 1pm;
Sunday and Bank Holidays: all hours;

excluding consultations made during normal contracted surgery hours which are outside the above hours and excluding consultations made as part of an overflow occurring in normal surgery hours.

The Health Board will require that third party verification of the time of the consultation be provided.

General practitioners will not vary their existing contracted surgery hours except by agreement with the health board.

The terms agreed under this item replace those in paragraph (iv) of the Form of Agreement dealing with out-of-hours payments and where more than one patient is seen in the course of such consultation, the fee payable for each additional patient shall be that set out in the current fee-schedule as published by the General Medical Services (Payments) Board.

(ii) Practice Nurse Subsidy

With effect from the 1st January, 1997, the maximum rate of Practice Nurse Subsidy will be increased to £14,742.

(iii) Banding Levels for Allowances

With effect from the 1st January, 1997, the banding levels for annual leave allowances and nursing/secretarial support have been revised and are set out in Tables 1 and 2 respectively in the Appendix to this Circular. It has been agreed that these allowances will be paid on a monthly basis rather than quarterly as heretofore.

(iv) Family Planning

With effect from 1st May 1997, the following fees are payable to suitably qualified doctors in respect of certain items related to Family Planning:

Advice and fitting of a diaphragm £25.00
Counselling and fitting of an IUCD £40.00

Non-GMS Prescribing

As part of the agreement, the I.M.O. has undertaken to co-operate in developing initiatives aimed at achieving more cost effective prescribing under the community drugs schemes, with the objective of achieving:

- a reduction in volume and frequency of prescribing and
- switch to less expensive medicines including generics.

In this regard a uniform prescription form in respect of drugs, medicines and medical and surgical appliances which are refundable by the State in whole or in part will be introduced. Following an analysis of prescribing under the community drugs schemes, discussions will be entered into, with a view to agreeing the introduction of this form at the earliest possible date.

Other issues.

It has been agreed that further discussions will take place on the following issues:

- Pension Entitlements of Former DMOs;
- GP Manpower;

- Examination of the implications for GP workload where medical cards are issued in certain hardship/exceptional cases;

- Disciplinary Procedures under the GMS Doctors' Contract.

Any queries in relation to the terms of this Circular may be addressed to Mr. Frank Edwards GMS Division (Extension 2541) or to the General Medical Services (Payments) Board.

Yours sincerely

Brian Mullen
GMS Division
5 June 1997

Appendix

Table 1 – Annual Leave Allowance

Panel Size	No. of Days	Locum Allowance Paid Pro-rata to Weekly Allowance
=> 100	14	£ 1,154
=> 200	16	£1,319
=> 300	18	£1,484
=> 400	20	£1,649
=> 500	21	£1,731
=> 600	22	£1,813
=> 700	23	£1,896
=> 800	24	£1,978
=> 900	25	£2,061
=> 1,000	28	£2,308
=> 1,100	29	£2,390
=> 1,200	30	£2,473
=> 1,300	31	£2,555
=> 1,400	32	£2,638
=> 1,500	35	£2,885

Table 2 – Practice Support Subsidy

Panel Size	Practice Nurse	Practice Secretary
1,500	£14,742	£8,653
1,499	£14,732	£8,647
1,498	£14,722	£8,641
1,497	£14,713	£8,636
1,496	£14,703	£8,630
1,495	£14,693	£8,624
1,494	£14,683	£8,618
1,493	£14,673	£8,613
1,492	£14,663	£8,607
1,491	£14,654	£8,601
1,490	£14,644	£8,595
Etc	Etc	Etc
100	£983	£577