



Department of Health

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NHS Management Executive  
St. Andrew's House  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

30<sup>th</sup> March 1999

Dear Colleague

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHARGES FOR  
DRUGS AND APPLIANCES FROM 1 APRIL 1999**

**PUBLICITY MATERIAL AND FORMS**

**Summary**

- This letter advises Health Boards and NHS Trusts of:-
  - revised Health Service charges to take effect from 1 April 1999;
  - action required;
  - when the new rates of prepayment certificates should be applied;
  - availability of revised publicity material and forms;

Full details are contained in the attached Annex.

**Action**

- Health Boards and NHS Trusts are asked to bring the Memorandum to this letter, which contains advice on exemption and remission of charges, as quickly as possible, to the attention of all staff involved in dealing with matters relating to prescription charges and refunds, prepayment certificates, elastic stockings, tights, fabric supports and wigs. Bulk supplies of the Memorandum are being sent under separate cover for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

**WILMA DICKSON**  
**Head of Development and Contractor Services**

**Addressees**

**For action:**  
General Managers,  
Health Boards

General Manager,  
Common Services Agency

General Manager,  
State Hospital Board  
For Scotland

General Manager,  
HEBS

Chief Executives,  
NHS Trusts

To be copied to Unit  
General Managers for  
information

**For information:**  
Executive Director  
SCPMDE

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Ref: NIP/6/7

**BACKGROUND****PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND THE COST OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES**

1. Regulations have been made and laid before Parliament providing for the following revisions:-

1.1 Prescription Charges: The prescription charge for drugs and appliances supplied on or after 1 April 1999 through the primary care services will be **£5.90 per item**. This charge will also apply to all items of elastic hosiery supplied, ie the charge for each elastic stocking will be £5.90 (£11.80 per pair).

1.2 Charges for Items Supplied by Hospitals to Out-Patients: The prescription charge for drugs and most appliances supplied to hospital out-patients will also be increased to £5.90 per item from 1 April 1999. It should be noted however that tights supplied only through the hospital service, will attract a charge of £11.80 per pair. Charges for fabric supports and wigs are listed at paragraph 4 below.

1.3 Prepayment Certificates: For all applications received by the Board on or after 1 April 1999 the charges for prepayment certificates will be as follows:-

Certificates valid for 4 months	£30.80
Certificates valid for 12 months	£84.60

2. Health Boards are asked to note that the new rates should be applied to all applications for prepayment certificates which are received by the Board on or after 1 April 1999. (No account may be taken of the backdating of the date of validity of the certificate before 1 April where the applicant has opted for this concession to allow for recovery of prescription charges paid within that period). The new rates should not be applied to certificates where application is received prior to 1 April 1999 regardless of the starting date of the certificate. Prepayment certificates should not be issued with starting dates more than 7 days earlier, or one month later, than the date on which the application is received. (ESC(P)34.1968 refers).

3. A prepayment certificate offers a saving to people who are not exempt from prescription charges and who need more than 5 prescribed items in a period of 4 months, or more than 14 items in a year. Pre-payment certificates also provide exemption from hospital out-patient charges for drugs and appliances (other than fabric supports and wigs) supplied through the hospital service.

## **CHARGES FOR FABRIC SUPPORTS AND WIGS**

4. As from 1 April 1999 the charges for these items, supplied only through the hospital service, are as follows:-

Surgical Brassiere	£19.95
Abdominal or Spinal Support	£29.95
Stock Modacrylic Wig	£49.00
Partial Human Hair Wig	£129.00
Full Bespoke Human Hair Wig	£188.50

## **COLLECTION OF CHARGES IN HOSPITALS**

5. Health Boards and NHS Trusts are asked to ensure that hospital authorities make adequate arrangements for collecting and bringing to account charges made in hospitals.

## **PUBLICITY ABOUT PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES**

6. A revised leaflet HC12 "Charges and Optical Voucher Values" is being updated to include revised figures from 1 April 1999 and will be issued in due course. Any remaining stocks of the HC12 effective from 1 April 1998 should be destroyed when the April 1999 version is received.

7. Leaflets HC11/HC11(LP) – patients' leaflets – are being updated and will be issued in due course. Remaining stock of earlier versions should be destroyed when you receive the April 1999 version.

8. Claim forms HC1 and HC5 are the only Low Income Scheme claim forms that are acceptable. All old claim forms, AG1 and AG5, that are held should be destroyed.

9. A bulk supply of the revised publicity material will be sent to Health Boards for distribution to GPs, chemist contractors, general dental practitioners, opticians and ophthalmic medical practitioners. As Boards know the usage of these forms in their area, they should decide how many copies should be sent to each practitioner. Bulk supplies of the revised publicity material will also be sent to Trusts for use by the public and appliance suppliers.

10. Prepayment Certificates: A revised application form for the purchase of prepayment certificates (form EC95 (Rev April 1999)) is being printed. Any remaining stocks of the forms showing April 1998 fees should be destroyed on receipt of the April 1999 revised version.

## **REGULATIONS**

11. Copies of the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1999 which give effect to these changes will be sent to Health Boards in due course.



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

Department of Health

MEL (99) 35

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General Managers, HBs  
General Manager, CSA  
General Manager, State Hospital  
General Manager, HEBS  
Chief Executive, NHS Trusts

13 May 1999

Dear Colleague

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHARGES FOR DRUGS AND APPLIANCES  
FROM 1 APRIL 1999 – (NHS MEL(1999)35)**

I refer to the above Circular issued on 30 March and would be very grateful if you could make the following amendments to the Memorandum to the Circular:

**Memorandum: Paragraph 2** – last two sentences paragraphs should read –

"The charges set out at 2a, 2b and 2c above....hospitals to out-patients."

"The charges set out at 2d to 2h above....after 1 April 1999."

**Memorandum: Paragraph 3.1** should read –

"The grounds on which a person may qualify for exemption from charges in respect of the items listed at 2a, 2b and 2c above..."

Yours sincerely

*Anne MacLeod*

MRS ANNE MacLEOD  
Directorate of Primary Care

COMMON SERVICES AGREEMENT	
RECEIVED	
20 MAY 1999	
FILE NO.	
REFERENCED TO	ACTION TAKEN
LW 715	

General Medical Practitioners  
Chemist Contractors  
Appliance Suppliers

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CHARGES FOR DRUGS, APPLIANCES, WIGS AND FABRIC SUPPORTS AND THE COST OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES FROM 1 APRIL 1999;**

**PUBLICITY MATERIAL AND FORMS**

1. This Memorandum advises doctors, chemist contractors and appliance suppliers of:-
  - the charges which will apply from 1 April 1999 for drugs and appliances supplied under the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1999;
  - availability of revised publicity material and forms.

**PRESCRIPTION CHARGES**

2. Regulations have been laid before Parliament to increase prescription charges from 1 April 1999.

**Item Charge**

a.	Elastic hosiery including stockings (excluding tights)	£5.90 each (ie £11.80 per pair)
b.	Each other appliance and each quantity of a drug (including oxygen cylinders)	£5.90
c.	tights supplied through the hospital service	£11.80 per pair
d.	surgical brassiere	£19.95
e.	abdominal or spinal support	£29.95
f.	stock modacrylic wig	£49.00
g.	partial human hair wig	£129.00
h.	full bespoke human hair wig	£188.50

The charges set out at 2a and 2b above will also be payable for items supplied by hospitals to out-patients.

The charges set out at 2c to 2h above apply where the consultation at which the supply of the item is authorised takes place on or after 1 April 1999.

### **EXEMPTION AND REMISSION CATEGORIES**

3. This paragraph sets out the arrangements for exemption from prescription charges and remission of charges.

3.1 The grounds on which a person may qualify for exemption from charges in respect of the items listed at 2a and 2b above are as follows:-

- 3.1.1 a person who is under 16 years of age;
- 3.1.2 a person who is under 19 years of age and is receiving full-time education;
- 3.1.3 a person aged 60 or over;
- 3.1.4 a woman with a valid exemption certificate issued by a Health Board because she is an expectant mother or has within the last 12 months given birth to a live child or a child registered still-born under the Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965 as amended by the Still-birth (Definition) Act 1992;
- 3.1.5 a person with a valid exemption certificate issued by a Health Board on the grounds that he/she has one or more of the following conditions:
  - permanent fistula (including caecostomy, colostomy, laryngostomy or ileostomy) which requires continuous surgical dressing or requires an appliance;
  - epilepsy requiring continuous anti-convulsive therapy;
  - a continuing physical disability which prevents the patient leaving home without the help of another person (temporary disabilities do not count even if they last for several months);
  - diabetes mellitus except where treatment is by diet alone;
  - hypoparathyroidism;
  - diabetes insipidus or other forms of hypopituitarism;
  - forms of hypoadrenalism (including Addison's disease) for which specific substitution therapy is essential;
  - myasthenia gravis;

- myxoedema or other conditions where supplemental thyroid hormone is necessary;

3.1.6 a person receiving a War or MOD Disablement Pension holding a valid exemption certificate issued by the Secretary of State in respect of the supply of drugs and appliances for the treatment of the accepted disablement only.

3.2 Remission from charges in respect of the items listed at 2a and 2b above may be claimed by:-

3.2.1 people and their partners receiving:-

- Income Support
- Family Credit
- Disability Working Allowance
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance

3.2.2 people aged 16 or over, and their partners, covered by a valid NHS Charges Certificate for full help (HC2) issued by the Health Benefits Division of the Prescription Pricing Authority.

3.3 A person may qualify for exemption from charges in respect of the items listed at 2c to 2h, above, if he or she is:-

3.3.1 a hospital in-patient at the time the wig or fabric support is supplied;

3.3.2 a person who is under 16 years of age;

3.3.3 a person who is under 19 years of age and is receiving full-time education;

3.3.4 a person receiving a War or MOD Disablement Pension who needs a wig or fabric support because of a disability for which the War or MOD Pension is being paid.

3.4 Remission from charges in respect of items listed at 2c to 2h, above, may be claimed by:-

3.4.1 people and their partners receiving:-

- Income Support
- Family Credit
- Disability Working Allowance
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance



referred-back prescription from a previous month) contractors are requested, in their own interest, to sort into bundles (and label accordingly) prescriptions on which the old charge had been collected.

## **DISPENSING DOCTORS**

9. Dispensing doctors should collect prescription charges at the new rate from 1 April 1999 and remit them to Health Boards in the normal way.

## **PUBLICITY ABOUT PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES**

10. A revised leaflet HC12 "Charges and Optical Voucher Values" is being updated to include revised figures from 1 April 1999 and will be issued in due course. Any remaining stocks of the HC12 effective from 1 April 1998 should be destroyed when the April 1999 version is received.

11. Prepayment Certificates: A revised application form for the purchase of prepayment certificates (form EC95 (Rev April 1999)) is being printed. Any remaining stocks of the forms showing April 1998 fees should be destroyed on receipt of the April 1999 revised version.

12. Leaflet HC11/HC11(LP) – Patients' Leaflets – are being updated and will be issued in due course. Remaining stocks of earlier versions should be destroyed when you receive the April 1999 version.

13. Claim Forms HC1 and HC5 – are the only Low Income Scheme claim forms that are acceptable. All old claim forms, AG1 and AG5, that are held, should be destroyed.

14. Any questions arising from this Memorandum should be addressed to the relevant Health Board.

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG  
March 1999

File ref: NIP/6/7