



Department of Health

NHS Management Executive
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
13 March 1995
Telephone 0131-244
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Dear Colleague

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHARGES FOR
DRUGS AND APPLIANCES FROM 1 APRIL 1996**

SUMMARY

1. This letter advises Health Boards of revised Health Service charges to take effect from 1 April 1996 and gives details of the consequent action required. It contains advice on the availability of prepayment certificates and reminds Boards about the procedure for determining when the new rates for prepayment certificates should be applied.

ACTION

2. Health Boards and NHS Trusts are asked to bring the Memorandum to this letter, which contains advice on exemption and remission of charge arrangements, 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.

BACKGROUND

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

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

3.1 Prescription Charges: The prescription charge for drugs and appliances supplied on or after 1 April 1996 through the primary care services will be £5.50 per item. This charge will also apply to all items of elastic hosiery supplied, ie the charge for each elastic stocking will be £5.50 (£11.00 per pair).

Addresses

For action:

General Managers,
Health Boards
General Manager,
Common Services Agency
General Manager,
State Hospitals Board
for Scotland
General Manager,
Health Education Board
for Scotland

Chief Executives,
NHS Trusts

To be copied to Unit
General Managers for
information.

For information:

Executive Director
SCPMDE

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3.2 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 £5.50 per item from 1 April 1996. It should be noted however that tights, supplied only through the hospital service, will attract a charge of £11.00 per pair. Charges for fabric supports and wigs are listed at 6. below.

3.3 Prepayment Certificates: For all applications received by the Board on or after 1 April 1996 the charges for prepayment certificates will be as follows:-

Certificates valid for 4 months	£28.50
Certificates valid for 12 months	£78.40

4. 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 1996. (No account may be taken of the backdating of the date of validity of the certificate to 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 1996 regardless of the starting date of the certificate. ESC(P)34/1968 indicates that 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.

5. A prepayment certificate continues to be worthwhile for anyone who would otherwise pay prescription charges and who needs more than 5 items on prescription in a period of 4 months, or more than 14 items in a year. Besides entitling the holder to claim exemption from prescription charges, a prepayment certificate also provides exemption from hospital out-patient charges for drugs and appliances (other than for fabric supports and wigs) supplied through the hospital service.

CHARGES FOR FABRIC SUPPORTS AND WIGS

6. As from 1 April 1996 the charges for these items, supplied only through the hospital service, are as follows:-

Surgical Brassiere	£19.25
Abdominal or Spinal Support	£28.30
Stock Modacrylic Wig	£46.00
Partial Human Hair Wig	£120.00
Full Bespoke Human Hair Wig	£175.00

COLLECTION OF CHARGES IN HOSPITALS

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

PUBLICITY ABOUT PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES

8. Publicity Material: New publicity posters and revised leaflets are being prepared to draw patients' attention to the possibility of exemption and remission from charges and the availability of prepayment certificates. In addition, a revised application form for the purchase of a prepayment certificate (Form EC95 (Rev April 1996)) is being printed. Any remaining stocks of the forms showing April 1995 fees (EC95 Rev April 95) should be destroyed. Copies of the revised posters, leaflets and Form EC95 will be forwarded to Health Boards as soon as they are available.

9. Old Publicity Material: The publicity material which has been applicable during 1995/96 will become obsolete after 31 March 1996.

REGULATIONS

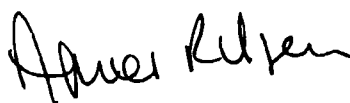
10. Copies of the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1996 which give effect to the new charges will be sent to Health Boards in due course.

REVISED PRESCRIPTION FORMS FROM 7 OCTOBER 1996

11. The income based Job Seekers Allowance will be introduced from 7 October. People and their partners in receipt of this allowance will be eligible for remission of prescription charges under amendments that will be made to the NHS (Travelling Expenses and Remission of Charges) Regulations.

12. The patient declaration on the prescription form will be revised to incorporate a declaration to this effect. The form will be phased in so that it is available for use from 7 October.

Yours sincerely



A ROBSON
Director of Primary Care

General Medical Practitioners
Chemist Contractors
Appliance Suppliers

CHARGES FOR DRUGS, APPLIANCES, WIGS AND FABRIC SUPPORTS AND COSTS OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES FROM 1 APRIL 1996

1. This Memorandum advises doctors, chemist contractors and appliance suppliers of the charges which will apply from 1 April 1996 for drugs and appliances supplied under the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1996.

PRESCRIPTION CHARGES

2. Regulations have been laid before Parliament to increase prescription charges from 1 April 1996.

Item Charge

a.	Elastic hosiery (except for tights)	£5.50 (ie £11.00 per pair)
b.	Each other appliance and each quantity of a drug (including oxygen cylinders)	£5.50

The above charges will also be payable for items supplied by hospitals to out-patients;

c.	tights supplied through the hospital service	£11.00 per pair
d.	surgical brassiere	£19.25
e.	abdominal or spinal support	£28.30
f.	stock modacrylic wig	£46.00
g.	partial human hair wig	£120.00
h.	full bespoke human hair wig	£175.00

The charges set out at 2d to h above apply where the consultation at which the supply of the item is authorised takes place on or after 1 April 1996.

3. The standard NHS **prescription charge** applies to items 2a, b and c unless a person is exempt or eligible for remission of prescription charges:

Exemption categories

- i. a person who is under 16 years of age;
- ii. a person who is under 19 years of age and is receiving full time education;
- iii. a man or woman who is aged 60 or over;
- iv. a woman with a valid exemption certificate issued by a Health Board because she is an expectant mother or has within the last twelve months given birth to a live child or a child registered as still-born under the Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965 as amended by the Still-birth (Definition) Act 1992;
- v. 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 form of hypopituitarism;
 - forms of hypoadrenalism (including Addison's disease) for which specific substitution therapy is essential;
 - myasthenia gravis.
- vi. 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.

Remission categories

- vii. people and their partners receiving:
 - Income Support
 - Family Credit
 - Disability Working Allowance who had capital of £8,000 or less at the date they made their claim.
 - **from 7 October 1996** people and their partners receiving Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance.
- viii. people aged 16 or over, and their partners, covered by a valid NHS Charges Certificate for full help (AG2) issued by the Health Benefits Division of the Prescription Pricing Authority.

NHS CHARGES FOR WIGS AND FABRIC SUPPORTS

4. NHS charges for wigs and fabric supports apply to items 2d to h above, unless a person is exempt or eligible for remission of charges:-

Exemption categories

- i. a hospital in-patient at the time the wig or fabric support is supplied;
- ii. a person who is under 16 years of age;
- iii. a person who is under 19 years of age and is receiving full-time education;
- iv. 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.

Remission categories

- v. people and their partners receiving:
 - Income Support
 - Family Credit
 - Disability Working Allowance who had capital of £8,000 or less at the date they made their claim.
 - **from 7 October 1996** people and their partners receiving Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance.
- vi. people aged 16 or over, and their partners, covered by a valid NHS Charges Certificate for full help (AG2), issued by the Health Benefits Division of the Prescription Pricing Authority;

- vii. people aged 16 or over with a valid NHS Charges Certificate for limited help (AG3), and their partners, may be entitled to partial charge remission.

APPLIANCES FOR WHICH AN NHS CHARGE IS PAYABLE

5. Health Boards and NHS Trusts are reminded that no charge may be made for any NHS appliance supplied to an in-patient. NHS out-patients may be charged only for those appliances specified in the appropriate Regulations - ie wigs, abdominal and spinal supports, dentures and bridges, elastic hosiery and contact lenses, and for prescribed appliances etc which are listed in the Drug Tariff (and for contact lens fluid supplied as part of contact lens therapy). The revised NHS charges set out in this Memorandum will be payable, except in those cases where the patient is exempt or eligible for remission of charges.

HOSPITAL DAY SURGERY PATIENTS

6. Drugs administered to day surgery patients in hospital are free of charge as are those drugs supplied until such time as the patient can attend their General Practitioner. Day surgery patients who get a prescription from a hospital doctor which is dispensed in the hospital pharmacy are liable for prescription charges (unless they are exempt or eligible for remission of charges).

COSTS OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES

7. In respect of all applications received by Health Boards on or after 1 April 1996 the cost of prepayment certificates will be £28.50 for a 4 month certificate and £78.40 for a 12 month certificate.

A certificate continues to be worthwhile for anyone who would otherwise pay prescription charges and who needs more than 5 items on prescription in a period of 4 months, or more than 14 items in a year. Besides entitling the holder to claim exemption from prescription charges, a prepayment certificate also provides exemption from hospital out-patient charges for drugs and appliances (other than for fabric supports and wigs supplied through the hospital service).

PRESCRIPTION FORMS

8. **From 7 October 1996** the remission arrangements will be extended to include people and their partners receiving Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance. The back of the prescription form will be amended to include a declaration to this effect. HMSO will issue the revised forms as part of the normal ordering process. There should be no need for either Health Boards or Trusts to place a special order.

CHEMIST CONTRACTORS AND APPLIANCE SUPPLIERS: SORTING OF PRESCRIPTION FORMS

9. In general, prescriptions written after 1 April 1996 including those written by chemist contractors and appliance suppliers on prescription forms submitted to the Pharmacy Practice

Division will be assumed to be at the increased rate. Where this is not the case (eg a 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

10. Dispensing doctors should collect prescription charges at the new rate from 1 April 1996 and remit them to Health Boards in the normal way.

PUBLICITY ABOUT PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES

11. Revised leaflets and posters to draw patients' attention to the revised charges and to the existence of exemption and remission provisions as well as prepayment certificates will be forwarded to you shortly. In addition, Form EC95, the application for the purchase of a prepayment certificate and Form EC57, Prescription Charge receipt are being revised and an initial supply will also be forwarded shortly to chemist contractors. All contractors are asked to display publicity material prominently and, where applicable, draw patients' attention to their rights to exemption from prescription charges and the availability of prepayment certificates. Contractors will be able to obtain further supplies of posters etc from the Health Board as required.

12. Old Publicity Material: The publicity poster on "NHS Prescription Charges from 1 April 1995" will become obsolete after 31 March 1996. Chemists should withdraw any existing stocks of Form EC95 (Rev April 1995) when the new version is supplied by the Board. Copies of Leaflet P11 (Rev April 1995) should continue to be used until copies of the new leaflets are received.

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

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

St Andrew's House

EDINBURGH

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12 March 1996

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Department of Health

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4 April 1996
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General Manager,
State Hospitals Board
for Scotland
General Manager,
Health Education Board
for Scotland

Chief Executives,
NHS Trusts

To be copied to Unit
General Managers for
information.

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Dear Colleague

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CHARGES FOR
DRUGS AND APPLIANCES FROM 1 APRIL 1996**

SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this letter is to advise Health Boards and NHS Trusts of an Addendum to the Memorandum to NHS MEL (1996) 25. The Memorandum contained on page 2 a list of the medical conditions which confer exemption from prescription charges however, MYXOEDEMA was omitted from the list. A full list of the medical conditions which confer exemption from prescription charges is attached at Annex 1.

ACTION

2. Health Boards and NHS Trusts are asked to distribute a copy of this Addendum to General Medical Practitioners, Chemist Contractors, Appliance Suppliers and any other staff involved with matters relating to prescription charges. Bulk supplies of this Addendum are being sent under separate cover for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

Mr. A ROBSON
Director of Primary Care

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10 APR 1996	
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REFERRED TO	ACTION TAKEN

MEDICAL CONDITIONS WHICH CONFER EXEMPTION FROM PRESCRIPTION CHARGES

- 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;
- myxoedema or other condition where supplemental thyroid hormone is necessary;
- hypoparathyroidism;
- diabetes insipidus or other form of hypopituitarism;
- forms of hypoadrenalism (including Addison's disease) for which specific substitution therapy is essential;
- myasthenia gravis;