



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

Department of Health

NHS
MEL(1998)16

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

13th March 1998

Dear Colleague

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHARGES FOR DRUGS AND APPLIANCES FROM 1 APRIL 1998

PUBLICITY MATERIAL AND FORMS

Summary

1. This letter advises Health Boards and NHS Trusts of:-
 - revised Health Service charges to take effect from 1 April 1998 and gives details of action required;
 - the availability for determining 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

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.

Yours sincerely

AGNES ROBSON
Director of Primary Care

Addressees

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Health Boards

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Common Services Agency

General Manager,
State Hospitals Board
for Scotland

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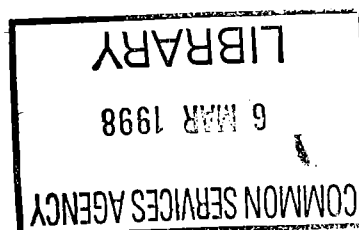
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BACKGROUND

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 1998 through the primary care services will be **£5.80 per item**. This charge will also apply to all items of elastic hosiery supplied, ie the charge for each elastic stocking will be £5.80 (£11.60 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 £5.80 per item from 1 April 1998. It should be noted however that tights supplied only through the hospital service, will attract a charge of £11.60 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 1998 the charges for prepayment certificates will be as follows:-

Certificates valid for 4 months	£30.10
Certificates valid for 12 months	£82.70

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 1998. (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 1998 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 SUPPORT AND WIGS

4. As from 1 April 1998 the charges for these items, supplied only through the hospital service, are as follows:-

Surgical Brassiere	£ 19.75 (no change)
Abdominal or Spinal Support	£ 29.50
Stock Modacrylic Wig	£ 48.00
Partial Human Hair Wig	£126.00
Full Bespoke Human Hair Wig	£184.50

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 to be 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 1998 and will be issued in due course. Any remaining stocks of the HC12 effective from 1 April 1997 should be destroyed when the April 1998 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 1998 version.

8. Leaflet HC13 - advisers' leaflet - has been revised to include details of the new optical (GOS) forms.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Prepayment Certificates: A revised application form for the purchase of prepayment certificates (form EC95 (Rev April 1998) is being printed. Any remaining stocks of the forms showing April 1997 fees should be destroyed on receipt of the April 1998 revised version.

REGULATIONS

12. Copies of the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1998 which give effect to these changes will be sent to Health Boards in due course.

General Medical Practitioners
Chemist Contractors
Appliance Suppliers

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CHARGES FOR DRUGS, APPLIANCES, WIGS
AND FABRIC SUPPORTS AND COSTS OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES
FROM 1 APRIL 1998**

PUBLICITY MATERIAL AND FORMS

CHANGES TO THE NHS LOW INCOME SCHEME

1. This Memorandum advises doctors, chemist contractors and appliance sufferers of:-
- the charges which will apply from 1 April 1998 for drugs and appliances supplied under the NHS (Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 1998;
- availability of revised publicity material and forms.

PRESCRIPTION CHARGES

2. Regulations have been laid before Parliament to increase prescription charges from 1 April 1998.

Item Charge

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------------|
| a. | Elastic hosiery including stockings
(excluding tights) | £5.80 each (ie £11.60 per pair) |
| b. | Each other appliance and each quantity
of a drug (including oxygen cylinders) | £5.80 |

The above charges will also be payable for items supplied by hospitals to out-patients. See paragraph 3, below for exemption and remission of these charges.

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|
| c. | tights supplied through the hospital service | £11.60 per pair |
| d. | surgical brassiere | £19.75 |
| e. | abdominal or spinal support | £29.50 |
| f. | stock modacrylic wig | £48.00 |
| g. | partial human hair wig | £126.00 |

h. full bespoke human hair wig £184.50

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 1998. See paragraph 3, below for exemption and remission of these 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 person 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 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;
- 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;
 - myxoedema or other conditions where supplemental thyroid hormone is necessary;

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
- 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 (HC2) issued by the Health Benefits Division of the Prescription Pricing Authority.

4. **NHS charges for wigs and fabric supports** apply to the items listed 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
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance

iv. 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;

vii. people aged 16 or over with a valid NHS Charges Certificate for limited help (HC3), 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 a hospital 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 hospitals 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).

COST OF PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES

7. In respect of all applications received by Health Boards on or after 1 April 1998 the cost of prepayment certificates will be as follows:-

Certificates valid for 4 months - £30.10

Certificates valid for 12 months - £82.70

8. A certificate continues to offer a saving to people who are not exempt from prescription charges who need more than 5 prescribed items 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).

CHEMIST CONTRACTORS AND APPLIANCE SUPPLIERS: SORTING OF PRESCRIPTION FORMS

9. In general, prescriptions written on or after 1 April 1998 including those dispensed 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 1998 and remit them to Health Boards in the normal way.

PUBLICITY ABOUT PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATES

11. A revised leaflet HC12 "Charges and Optical Voucher Values" is being updated to include revised figures from 1 April 1998 and will be issued in due course. Any remaining stocks of the HC12 effective from 1 December 1997 should be destroyed when the April 1998 version is received.
12. Prepayment Certificates: A revised application form for the purchase of prepayment certificates (form EC95 (Rev April 1998) is being printed. Any remaining stocks of the forms showing April 1997 fees should be destroyed on receipt of the April 1998 revised version.
13. Leaflet 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 1998 version.
14. Leaflet HC13 - advisers leaflet - has been revised to include details of the new optical (GOS) forms.
15. 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.
16. Any questions arising from this Memorandum should be addressed to the relevant Health Board.

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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March 1998

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