



**Date:** 13th January 2020

**Circular Number:** NCO-02-2020

**Arrangements for the Provision of Services under the Health Act 1970 (as amended) and the Health (General Practitioner Service) Act, 2014**

Dear Doctor,

I refer to Circular number NCO-01-19 dated 04<sup>th</sup> June 2019 in which I set out the details of the GP Contract Agreement which was concluded earlier this year by the Department of Health, the Health Services Executive (HSE) and the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO), hereinafter referred to as the Agreement.

The Agreement encompasses three distinct strands as follows;

- i. Fee increases under the General Medical Services (GMS) contracts (i.e. Medical Card and GP Visit Card Capitation Contracts) in return for the delivery by holders of said Contracts of the package of Service Modernisation and Reform Measures outlined in the Agreement. Additional funding of €131.5m is being allocated over the period 2019 to 2022 for these fee increases. The first phase of the fee increases was introduced from 1st July, 2019 for those GMS contract holders to whom the Modernisation and Reform measures provided for in the Agreement apply.
- ii. Service Developments – Introduction of an Integrated Model of Structured Chronic Disease Prevention and Management and additional Special Items of Service. Additional funding of €80m will be allocated for these Service Developments over the period 2020 – 2023.
- iii. Eligibility- (extension of eligibility to GP Care without fees will be the subject of further engagement between the Parties).

The purpose of this Circular is to provide you with details pertaining to the new Special Items of Service that will be introduced with effect from January, 2020.

**Additional Special Items of Service**

The following additional Special Items of Service are being added to the GMS Capitation Contracts and will be payable with effect from 1st January, 2020 to GMS Capitation Contract holders to whom the terms of the Modernisation and Reform Measures provided for in the Agreement apply in respect of valid claims.

- I. Therapeutic Phlebotomy for eligible patients with Haemochromatosis. It is estimated that the introduction of this new item of service on 1st January 2020 will allow up to 8,000 GMS patients to access a therapeutic phlebotomy service in General Practice thereby obviating the need for such patients to attend hospital outpatient clinics for same. The PCERS code for claiming this new special item of service is **AL**.
- II. Provision, on a pilot basis, of Virtual Clinics involving GPs and a Consultant Cardiologist to discuss eligible patients with heart failure and agree/amend care plans for these patients where clinically necessary. This new item of service will initially be confined to the pilot clinic in the Carlow/Kilkenny area with a view to extending it to a further 3 clinics by 2022. It is estimated that the 4 clinics, when fully operational will provide 17,500 virtual clinic slots per year.
- III. In recognition of the onerous workload demands arising from their involvement in involuntary admissions under mental health legislation GPs will be able to claim a fee in respect of the examination of a person and making a recommendation for that person to be involuntarily admitted to an approved centre under Section 10 of the Mental Health Act 2001.

The claiming process for Items II and III above shall be the subject to further communication from the HSE in the coming weeks.

Details of the fee rates for the additional Special Items of Service are set out in the **Appendix** to this Circular.

The HSE looks forward to continuing the implementation of the terms of the Agreement including the new Service Developments provided for therein, in collaboration with General Practice during 2020 and subsequent years.

**Yours Sincerely,**



**Pat Healy**  
**National Director,**  
**Community Strategy and Planning**

## Appendix

### **Additional Special Items of Service**

Provision of therapeutic phlebotomy for eligible patients with Haemochromatosis	€100
Service provider participation in a Health Service Executive approved Virtual Heart Failure Clinic facilitated by Consultant Cardiologist – fee per eligible patient	€100
Amount payable in respect of examination of person and making a recommendation for that person to be involuntarily admitted to an approved centre under section 10 the Mental Health Act 2001.	€150