



Borderwise:

Health

Organisation of Health Services

This information sheet aims to provide a general overview of the health services which are available in the Republic of Ireland. In Ireland the Department of Health and Children is responsible for health policy. Health and personal social services are delivered by the Health Service Executive (HSE). This is achieved through a network of Local Health Offices, health centres and clinics. There are four Health Service Executive Administrative Areas.



Nationally, responsibility for the provision of health and personal social services lies with the bodies outlined below and these services are delivered through the four HSE Administrative regions ;

- National Hospitals Office (NHO) who provide public hospital and ambulance services
- Primary, Community and Continuing Care who provide care in the community
- Population Health who promote and protect the health of the population



For more information contact the Health Service Executive, Tel: 045 880400 www.hse.ie

Entitlement to Health Services

The population is divided into two groups for the purposes of entitlement to health services – medical card holders and non-medical card holders. There are two kinds of medical card – a standard medical card or a GP visit card. If you have a standard medical card, you are entitled to

- free GP services
- free prescribed drugs and medicines
- free in-patient and out-patient public hospital services (but you may have to pay long-stay maintenance charges if you are in hospital for more than 30 days)
- free dental, ophthalmic and aural services
- free public health nursing services and
- free maternity and infant care services

Non medical card holders are entitled to

- subsidised prescribed drugs and medicines
- free in-patient and out-patient public hospital services (but you may have to pay short stay and long-stay maintenance charges and out-patient charges) and
- free maternity and infant care services

Going
South

Medical Cards

A medical card issued by the Health Service Executive (HSE) in Ireland enables the bearer to receive certain health services free of charge; however you must pass a means test in order to qualify. If you are issued with a medical card, the card would normally cover you and your dependent spouse and child dependants. Unless you have a medical card, visits to family doctors in Ireland are not free. The GP Visit Card was announced in 2005 as an initiative to assist those who did not qualify for a medical card on income grounds but for whom the cost of visiting a GP was often prohibitively high. Eligibility for all GP Visit Cards is means tested you must be ordinarily resident in Ireland.

Applying for a Medical Card or GP visit card

In order to apply for a Medical card you must complete an MCI application form, or MC2 for those aged 70 and over. You can obtain an application form and a list of participating doctors from your local health centre or at the Social Welfare Local Office. To apply for a GP Visit Card, you use the same application form as that for a medical card. While your GP Visit Card application is being processed, the HSE will also assess your entitlement for a full medical card.

Frontier Workers

Workers who continue to reside in Northern Ireland (NI) but work in the Republic of Ireland may be entitled to a medical card but this will be subject to a means test. Frontier workers must apply in the usual way and they will be advised of their entitlement. For those living in NI who wish to move permanently to ROI they will automatically qualify for a medical card if they are aged 70 or over or if they are transferring a contribution based social security payment from NI. For further information on entitlement to health services contact;

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