



Wellstone Clinic

Renal Care



Patient Entitlement Booklet
Edition 2008

PATIENT ENTITLEMENT BOOKLET

Edition 2008

Table of Contents

Housing	Page 3
Pensions	Page 6
Benefits	Page 10
Taxation and Medical Expenses	Page 22
Transport	Page 27
Employment	Page 30
Useful Information and Contact No's	Page 32

HOUSING

Household Benefits

This covers Electricity / Gas Allowance / Free TV Licence and Telephone if you are:

- Aged 70 or over
- Getting carers allowance or
- Aged under 70 and getting a qualifying payment and you live alone or with certain excepted persons.

House Improvements for Older People

The HSE may carry out essential repairs and maintenance to houses that are occupied by older people to improve their living conditions.

The local authorities and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government have overall responsibility for housing. They are also responsible for the disabled person's grant. This grant is aimed at people who have a disability and need adaptations to their home. Up to 90% maximum grant €20,320

Where to apply:

Local Health Centre or HSE
Tel:056 7751 702 / 056 778 4600

Fuel Allowance

Is payable weekly at the rate of €18.00 from Oct for 29 weeks to late April. You must be living alone or with the following people:

- A dependant spouse or partner
- A person who is caring for you because you are an invalid
- Another person who would qualify for the payment in their own right

Housing Aid for the Elderly

This is from the HSE and can be applied for through your local community welfare officer.
Grant €2500 for essential maintenance

Essential Repairs Grant

Available to Senior citizens to improve the condition of the house so that the person can remain in their dwelling and not have to be rehoused. Maximum grant is €9,530.

PENSION

State Pension Transition and State Pension

These are social payments made when you reach 65 for Transition and 66 for Contributory. They are based on your PRSI record. The pensions are not means tested so your personal rate is not affected by other income you may have such as an occupational pension. However the increase for a qualified adult is means tested. You must be retired from insurable employment to qualify for transition. You can apply for State Pension at 66 and continue working.

You will qualify for State Pension Transition if you

- are aged 65
- are retired from insurable employment* and
- satisfy certain social insurance contribution conditions

*You do not need to give up employment completely, you can be employed part-time and earn less than €38 per week paying PRSI at class

You will not be able to work full time if you earn less than €3,174 per year if you are self employed. The retirement condition no longer applies on reaching 66. You can continue to work full time after 66 and also collect State Pension.

If you are getting the max Invalidity Pension or if you are in receipt of State Pension (Transition), you will automatically transfer to State Pension (Contributory) when you reach 66. The amount of pension you will get will not change.

You should apply for your pension 5 months prior to pension age. If you have worked in an EU country or country which Ireland has a social security agreement with, you should apply 6 months prior.

Contact:
Pension Services Office
College Road
Sligo
Lo Call – 1890 500 000

Persons who retire early may become a Voluntary Contributor if they meet certain conditions. Voluntary contributions can help maintain or improve person's pension entitlements

List of Qualifying payments for persons aged between 66 and 70

- State pension, contributory and non contributory
- State pension transition
- Blind Pension
- Widow / Widowers Contributory / Non contributory Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Deserted Wife's Benefit
- One parent family
- Prisoners Wife allowance

Payments for persons under 66

- Invalidity Pension
- Blind Pension
- Incapacity Supplement/Disability Pension
- Disability Allowance
- Social Security Pension/Benefit from a country covered by EU Regulations

BENEFITS

Long Term Illness Cover:

The long term illness scheme entitles patients suffering from 1 of 15 specified chronic conditions to full drug reimbursement irrespective of income. Allowable medicines include: diagnostic products, clinical products, needles, syringes, lancets, ostomy/urinary devices and nutritional products. Medicines and certain approved appliances are prescribed free of charge under the 2T9S.

Conditions are:

Mental Illness
Cystic Fibrosis
Cerebral Palsy
Multiple Sclerosis
Spina Bifida
Epilepsy
Acute Leukaemia
Mental handicap
Hydrocephalus
Diabetes Mellitus

Parkinson's
Phenylketonuria
Haemophilia
Diabetes Insipidus
Muscular Dystrophy

Long Term Illness Scheme:

Persons suffering from certain conditions such as End Stage Kidney Disease in Ireland who are not already medical card holders may obtain without charge the drugs, medicines and medical/surgical appliances for the treatment of that condition. These free drugs, medicines and appliances are provided under the long term illness scheme. This scheme is administered by your local health office.

The long term scheme does not depend on your income or other circumstances and is separate from your medical card scheme and G.P visit scheme.

Where to apply:

Local Health Office
Phone: 056 7751702

Carers Allowance:

Carers allowance is a payment to people who are looking after someone who is need of support because of age, physical or learning disability or illness, including mental illness. The carers allowance is not payable to everyone, it is mainly aimed at carers on low incomes, who live with and look after certain people who need full time care and attention. You will also qualify for free household benefits such as Electricity, Natural Gas, Bottles Gas/ Refill allowance/ Free TV Licence, Free telephone rental allowance and free travel pass. Carers allowance is not taken into account in the assessment for a medical card. Carers allowance will continue to be paid 6 weeks after the person dies. You may get a bereavement grant of €850.

Your payment is made up of a personal rate for yourself and extra amounts for your qualified child/ children. The amount you may get depends on your means. The amount will vary depending on the individuals financial circumstances.

Where to apply:

Carers Allowance Section
Social Welfare Services
Office of Government Building
Ballinalee Road,
Longford
Ph: 01 704 3000 ext 8490
or 043 – 45211 ext 94

Treatment Benefit Scheme:

This scheme is run by the Department of Social and Family that provides dental, optical and aural services to qualified people. The treatment benefit scheme is available to insured workers and retired people who have the required number of PRSI contributions. Under the scheme you get a contribution towards the costs involved.

Medical card holders are legally entitled to dental, optical and aural services from Health Service Executive area's.

Where to apply:

Treatment benefit section Department of Social
and Family Affairs
St Oliver Plunkett Street
Letterkenny.
Co. Donegal
Ph: Lo Call 1890 400 400

Illness Benefit:

This is a payment for insured people who cannot work due to illness. It has replaced disability benefit.

You may qualify if you:

- Are unable to work due to illness
- Satisfy PRSI conditions and
- Are under the age of 66
- You must have at least 52 weeks PRSI contributions paid since you first started work

- 39 weeks PRSI contributions paid and credited in the relevant tax year. (13 of these must be paid contributions)
- Or
- 26 weeks PRSI contributions paid in the relevant tax year and 26 weeks PRSI
- contributions in the tax year immediately before the relevant tax year

Where to apply:

Illness Benefit Enquires Section

Ph: 01 679 777

Information Services

Ph: 01 7043000

Or Social Services

Home Care Support Scheme for Carers:

The HSE has responsibility for the delivery of public health community and home care supports at local level.

The Home Care Support Scheme (Home Care Support Package) is an administrative scheme operated by the HSE.

The scheme is aimed mainly at those requiring medium to high caring support to continue to live at home independently. As this scheme is still in its infancy there are no national guidelines regarding how admission to the scheme is decided.

The main priority of the Home Care Support Scheme is older people living in the community or those who are inpatients in acute hospitals at risk of admission to long term care.

Where to apply:

Public Health Nurse or Local Health Office
Ph: 056 7751702

Disablement Benefit:

Disablement benefit can be paid to you as a result of an accident at work or a prescribed disease contracted at work or if you suffer a loss of physical or mental faculty.

You may be entitled to benefits under the Occupational Injuries Scheme.

These benefits include Disablement Benefit; this is divided into a single lump sum or a regular pension depending on the injury or effect of the disease.

You may qualify if you:

- work and pay PRSI at class A, B*, D, J or M
- loose physical or mental abilities because of:
 1. an accident at work
 2. a commuter accident on a direct route between your home and your workplace
 3. a prescribed disease contracted at work

*Under the Occupational Injuries Scheme, civil servants insured at PRSI Class B, cannot get Disablement Benefit for the 1st 26 weeks after the date of the accident. They may get half the standard rate of disablement benefit after this period. The other half is paid by the parent department or state organisation involved.

If you are getting disablement pension and you are unfit to work you may qualify for benefit based on your social insurance contributions.

If you do not qualify for disability benefit you may be entitled to Unemployment supplement.

Where to apply:

Disablement Benefit Section
Social Welfare Services Office
Government Buildings
Ballinalee Road
Longford
Ph: 043 45211 or 01 7043000

Disability Allowance:

Disability allowance is a weekly allowance paid to people with a disability that are aged 16 years or over and under 66. The disability must be expected to last at least 1 year and the allowance is subject to both medical suitability and a means test.

To qualify for Disability Allowance you must:

- Have an injury, disease or physical or mental disability that has continued or may be expected to continue for at least 1 year
- Be aged between 16-66
- Satisfy a means test
- Satisfy the habitual residence condition

Since January 2007, people in residential care are entitled to the maximum personal rate of disability allowance subject to a means test

Where to apply:

Social Welfare Office
Hebron Rd
Kilkenny

Completed applications forms to:

Disability Allowance Section
Social Welfare Office Government Building
Ballinalee Road, Longford
Ph: 043-45211 or 01- 7043948

Nursing Home Subvention:

People who go into registered private nursing homes may get a subvention from the HSE if they are dependant and pass a means test.

The means test always takes account of your income and it may also take your assets and house into account.

The subvention is designed to help with nursing home costs. It was not designed to meet the full costs. However, there are circumstances in which the HSE may pay the full cost of a private nursing home.

Where to apply:

Local Health Centre or HSE
Ph: 056 7751 702

Entitlement to Long Term Care:

Unless you have a medical card you will have to pay a charge for in-patient services in public hospitals. Legislation also gives an entitlement to free in-patient services in other institutions but the services provided in institutions such as welfare homes are sometimes categorised as institutional assistance rather than in-patient services.

If you go into a private nursing home you have to pay the costs involved but you may qualify for a nursing home subvention if you are dependant and you pass a means test.

Under the Health Acts, certain people are entitled to free in-patient services in public hospitals. Some people may have to re-pay small daily hospital charges.

Some patients may have to pay long term charges but these do not apply to medical card holders

Where to apply:

Local Health Centre or HSE
Ph: 056 7751 702

TAXATION AND MEDICAL EXPENSES

If you incur medical expenses that are not covered by the state or by private health insurance you may claim tax relief on some of those expenses. These expenses include the costs involved in nursing home care. Tax relief is also available for premiums paid for health insurance and for long term care insurance. The insurance company grants this tax relief at source.

Where to apply:

Blind Persons Section
Pension Services Office
College Road
Sligo
Ph: Lo Call 1890 500 500

Medical Expenses (up to 2006 Tax Year:

Tax relief is available at the highest rate of income tax for year of the claim. The first €125.00 per year for an individual or €250.00 for a family is excluded (due to change in 2008). Routine dental and ophthalmic expenses are included.

Medical Expenses (claims from 2007 tax year):

There is now no limit on claims, that is the previous €125/€250 (as above) amount disallowed no longer applies.

To claim complete Med 1 Form at the end of the tax year. Med 2 forms available from dentist

Tax Relief on Medical Expenses:

Apply using Med I form – The medical expenses that attract tax relief include:

- Cost of doctors and consultants visits
- Certain items prescribed by a doctor/Consultant and monthly fee re Drug Payment Scheme
- Maintenance or treatment in a hospital or approved nursing home
- Physiotherapy/Chiropody/Podiatry services or similar treatment prescribed by a practitioner
- Hearing Aids
- Specialised dental treatment
- Cost of gluten free food for Celiac's

National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF):

- If you are a public patients and you are on a public hospital patient waiting list for an operation for over 3 months, you can contact the NTPF to discuss options for treatment in a private hospital
- The NTPF sources treatment for qualifying patients in hospitals in Ireland, Northern Ireland and England.
- Patients who opt for treatment with the NTPF will receive their treatment free of charge

Eligibility guidelines for medical Cards, with entitlements to free GP visits and free medicines:

All persons aged 70 and over are entitled to medical card regardless of their income. This medical card covers the applicant only
In the case of a married couple where 1 person is over 70 and one under, the person over 70 is automatically entitled to a medical card of their own

Key Changes:

- The assessment process will be based on the income of the applicant and spouse if any, after tax and PRSI have been deducted
- Reasonable expenses incurred in respect to childcare costs
- Reasonable expenses incurred on rent/mortgage payments will be allowed
- Reasonable expenses incurred in travel to work will be allowed
- The GP Visit Card is an initiative to assist those who do not qualify for a medical card on income grounds, but for whom the cost of visiting a GP may be prohibitively high. It is means tested.

Drug Payment Scheme (DPS):

This applies to persons who do not have a medical card. Under the DPS, no individual or family will be required to pay more than €85.00 in any calendar month for prescribed medicines for use by that person or his/her family in that month, provided that all prescribed medicines are from the same pharmacy in that month.

Drug Refund Scheme:

The drug refund scheme continues in operation and is suitable for patients with short term high drug costs. Under this scheme if you spend more than €85.00 per family per month you can claim back the excess.

TRANSPORT

Free Travel Pass:

Free travel on public transport and some private bus and ferry services available to those aged 66 or over and to certain groups of people under age 66 such as the blind and those getting disability payments. This now covers travelling in Northern Ireland

Companion Travel Pass:

Certain people medically assessed as being unfit to travel alone, are eligible to have someone aged 16 or over accompany them free of charge

Mobility Allowance:

This is a Means Tested HSE payment (high rate €202 per month, low rate €10) for those aged 16-66 with severe disability unable to walk, who need a change of surroundings. Maximum is €101 if claiming Disability Drivers and Passengers tax relief. Not paid for 3 years from date of grant if availing of motorised transport grant.

Apply to you local Health Office

Motorised Transport Grant:

Means tested HSE grant paid to those aged 17-65 with severe disability toward the purchase or adaptation of a car which is essential to obtain or retain employment. Self employed may also be eligible. It may be paid if living in a very isolated area, though not in employment.

Disabled drivers and passengers tax relief:

Drivers or passengers with physical disabilities (in receipt of a private medical certificate from the HSE), who use a specially adapted motor vehicle, are entitled to claim exemption from Vehicle Registration Tax and Value Added Tax on the vehicles, repayment of duty on fuel and exemption from annual road tax.

Transport and Travel:

Claim form: Nicky Glynn
HSE Office
Ph: 056 7751702

Disabled Persons Parking Card:

Available to drivers or passengers with disabilities aged 5 or over, for use in any car in which they travel. Cost €25.00, application forms available from:

Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland
Parking Card Section,
Ballindine
Co. Mayo
Ph: 094 9364034

OR

Irish Wheelchair Association
National Mobility Centre
Ballinagappa Road
Clane
Co. Kildare
Ph: 045 893094

Travel Benefits:

- Every person over the age of 66 is entitled to a free travel pass. Free travel is available on public transport, bus rail or Luas
- Aged over 70 – driving licence free of charge
- Over 65 – passport free of charge

EMPLOYMENT

Wage Subsidy Scheme:

Provides financial assistance to an employer who employs a person with a disability with productivity levels between 50-80% of usual performance.

Refund of Value Added Tax:

A refund of Vat may be claimed if certain aid appliances used by a person with disabilities to assist them with independent living are purchased. Claim forms can be got from:

VAT Repayments Section
Revenue
Kilrush Road
Ennis
Co. Clare
Ph: Lo Call 1890 202 033

Workplace/Equipment Adaptation Grant:

Funding (€6,348.70 max) for person with disability starting or already in employment in order to make their workplace more accessible or equipment easier to use.

Commencing Employment (C.E.):

Up to 3 years, part time employment open to people aged 35 or over on disability payment for 6 months. Apply to FAS, 1 Years employment for those aged 18 or over

Back to Work Allowance:

If you are getting Disability Allowance for at least 15 months (12 months if aged 50 or over) and return to the workforce, you may be able to transfer to the Back to Work Allowance. If taking up employment, you will be paid 75% of your Disability Allowance for the first year, 50% for the second year and 25% for the third year. You should apply for this before starting employment.

Useful Information:

- Recovery of Social Welfare Overpayments
- Credited Contributions
- Smokeless fuel Allowance
- Rates of Payment
- Widow/Widowers Contributory Pension/
Non Contributory Pension
- Injury Benefit
- Child Benefit
- Invalidity Pension
- Bereavement Grant
- Supplementary Welfare Allowance
 - Back to Work Enterprise Allowance

All above available from Social Welfare Office

Useful Contact Numbers:

The Legal Aid Board Maudlin Street, Kilkenny	056 7761611
Kilkenny City Hall	056 7721076
Kilkenny County Hall	056 7752699
HSE	056 7751702
County Clinic	056 7784600
Social Welfare Office	056 7763086
Tax Office	056 7760700
Kilkenny Citizens Information, 4 the Parade, Kilkenny	056 7762755
Age Action Ireland	01 475 6989
Carers Association – Freephone	1800 240 724

Mobility and Aids and Appliances Lo Call	1890 277 478
Senior Helpline Lo Call	1850 440 444
Dept of Social and Family Affairs, Hebron Rd, Kilkenny	056 7784600
Illness Benefit Telephone Enquiries Section	01 679 7777
Information Services	01 704 3000
NLY AHEAD Association for Higher Education access and Disability Newman House, 86 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2	01 475 2386
Free Directory Enquiries service for people unable to use phone book due to physical/medical conditions.	Apply to: 1800 574 574

Freedom of Information

Under the Freedom of Information Act, any citizen is entitled to request access to any record held by a public body. The request must be made in writing and state that it is made under this act. No reason for the request must be given. The public body must respond to the request within a 4 week period (extendable for justifiable reasons to 8 weeks). A request can only be refused on a number of specific grounds eg. Confidentiality, security, being part of an ongoing deliberative process)

To appeal a refusal contact:
The Information Commissionaire

18 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2
Ph: 01 639 5689



Wellstone Clinic Kilkenny
Unit 1
Leggettsrath Business Park
Dublin Road
Kilkenny
Telephone: 056 7752824
Fax: 056 7752829
Email: info@wellstonekilkenny.ie

Wellstone Clinic Galway
Block 9
Galway Technology Park
Parkmore
Galway
Telephone: 091 769796
Fax: 091 766323
Email: info@wellstonegalway.ie