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26 April 2006

Ms Charmain Runciman
Scottish Executive Health Department
St Andrews House (1ER)
Regent Road
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG

Dear Ms Runciman

CONSULTATION ON REVIEW OF NHS PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND EXEMPTION ARRANGEMENTS IN SCOTLAND

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation document.

The document is well researched and clearly presented guiding the reader through the different change possibilities. The background information, financial information and contrasts with other countries help to determine the implications of some of the change possibilities.

Views on the specific change possibilities are as follows:

Review of Exemptions Related To Medical Conditions

From the information in the document, any change under this section will be a complex procedure and will require guidance from an expert group. Given that the chronic medical conditions for exemption from charges were agreed in 1968, I would agree with Change Possibility 1 to review the criteria by which chronic conditions are defined and consider the therapeutic categories of drugs that are essential to their treatment.

There should be no change to the current exemption of covering all drugs whether or not they relate to the condition.

Economic Need & Affordability

There is strong agreement with the Executive's aim that people should not be deterred from obtaining their medication because they cannot afford prescription charges and that there needs to be an affordable system of payment for those with substantial need. Therefore, there would be agreement to consider further extending exemption to all persons holding a LIS HC3 certificate.

We would support Change Possibility 7 to introduce a monthly charge cap with the limit set in line with the current cost of pre-payment certificate but with a more affordable entry point.


The introduction of a lower flat rate charge payable by all would not be supported.

Ability To Pay

We would support further work being done on the implications of Change Possibility 11 - the introduction of concessionary charges for persons aged 19 or over in full time education or training.

We are pleased to note that there are no changes suggested to Age Exemptions. The current position with exemption for those under 16 and aged 60 or over remain appropriate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin D Mackenzie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Colin D Mackenzie
Director of Housing & Social Work

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM: REVIEW OF NHS PRESCRIPTION CHARGES AND EXEMPTION ARRANGEMENTS IN SCOTLAND

Please complete the details below and return it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name: COLIN D. HACKENZIE

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1. Are you responding: (please tick one box)
- (a) as an individual go to Q2a/b and then Q4
- (b) on behalf of a group/organisation go to Q3 and then Q4

INDIVIDUALS

- 2a. Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website)?

Yes (go to 2b below)

No, not at all We will treat your response as confidential

- 2b. Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (please tick one of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

- 3 The name and address of your organisation *will be* made available to the public (in the Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website). Are you also content for your response to be made available?

Yes

No We will treat your response as confidential

SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

- 4 We will share your response internally with other Scottish Executive policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes

No