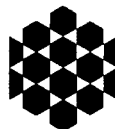


To: Chief Executives of HSS Boards
& HSC Trusts;

Copies to: Directors of Finance,
Directors of Social Services of HSS
Boards and HSC Trusts



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.ghsspsni.gov.uk

Circular HSS (ECCU) 1/2008

13 March 2008

Charges for Residential Accommodation

The Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 (SR 91)

1. Introduction

This circular advises of amendments to the Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993 that come into operation on **07 April 2008**. These regulations govern how income and capital resources are to be calculated for the purpose of assessing a person's ability to pay for residential or nursing home care arranged by a Health and Social Services Board by virtue of Articles 15 and 36 of the 1972 Order.

A copy of the Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 which come into operation on 07 April 2008 are enclosed with this circular.

2. Summary

This circular advises of:

- i. increases in capital limits from £13,000 (lower) and £21,500 (upper) to **£13,500 (lower)** and **£22,250 (upper)**, coming into operation on 07th April 2008;
- ii. increases in the amount of savings credit disregard from £5.25 to **£5.45 for individuals** and from £7.85 to **£8.15 for couples**, coming into operation from 07th April 2008; and

It also:

- iii. advises of an increase in the Personal Expenses Allowance to **£21.15**.

The Annex contains fuller details.

3. Action

HSS Trusts are asked to implement the above changes with effect from 7th April 2008.

4. Enquiries

Any enquiries relating to this letter should be directed to:

Julianne Broten Noble
Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety
Elderly and Community Care Unit
D1.4
Castle Buildings
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 2374.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Martin', with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Ray Martin
Elderly and Community Care Unit

Enc.

Capital Limits

1. Capital limits in the financial assessment for residential accommodation are increased from £13,000 (lower) and £21,500 (upper) to £13,500 (lower) and £22,250 (upper) with effect from 07th April 2008. These amounts may be increased in April each year to ensure that the capital limits keep pace with inflation. The Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 implement the new limits.

Pension Credit - savings credit disregard

2. The Assessment of Resources Regulations, as amended in October 2003, introduced a new savings disregard in response to the introduction of Pension Credit. The weekly savings disregard for Pension Credit is increased from £5.25 to £5.45 for individuals and from £7.85 to £8.15 for couples with effect from 07th April 2008, this continues to apply not only to people in receipt of savings credit but also to those with incomes above the savings credit threshold.

Personal Expenses Allowance

3. The new PEA prescribed amount, from 07 April 2008, is £21.15. It applies to everyone receiving means-tested support from HSS Trusts for residential or nursing home care. Boards and Trusts are reminded that the PEA is a small weekly allowance that is disregarded so that it may be used by residents to spend each week as they wish on personal items and other direct expenses. Pressure of any kind to the contrary is not acceptable, as residents should not be required to spend their PEA in particular ways.