

To: Chief Executives of HSS Boards
& Trusts;

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



Department of

**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Circular HSS (ECCU) 2/2007

26 March 2007

Charges for Residential Accommodation

The Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (SR 161)

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 **09 April 2007**. 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) 2007 which come into operation on 09 April 2007 are enclosed with this circular.

2. Summary

This circular advises of:

- i. increases in capital limits from £12,750 (lower) and £21,000 (upper) to **£13,000 (lower)** and **£21,500 (upper)**, coming into operation on 09th April 2007;
- ii. increases in the amount of savings credit disregard from £5.05 to **£5.25 for individuals** and from £7.50 to **£7.85 for couples**, coming into operation from 09th April 2007; and
- iii. extends the current disregard for child benefit as child benefit can now be paid in respect of certain Young Persons

It also:

- iv. advises of an increase in the Personal Expenses Allowance to **£20.45**;
and

- v. Reminds Trusts of the treatment of subvention payments in a financial assessment.

The Annex contains fuller details.

3. Action

HSS Trusts are asked to implement the above changes with effect from 09th April 2007.

4. Enquiries

Any enquiries relating to this letter should be directed to:

Dean Looney
Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety
Elderly and Community Care Unit
D2.20
Castle Buildings
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 2471.

Ray Martin
Elderly and Community Care Unit

Enc.

Capital Limits

1. Capital limits in the financial assessment for residential accommodation are increased from £12,750 (lower) and £21,000 (upper) to £13,000 (lower) and £21,500 (upper) with effect from 09th April 2007. 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) 2007 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 £5.05 to £5.25 for individuals and from £7.50 to £7.85 for couples with effect from 09th April 2007, this continues to apply not only to people in receipt of savings credit but also to those with incomes above the savings credit threshold.

Payment of Child Benefit

3. The Assessment of Resources regulations amend paragraph 28A of Schedule 3 to the Assessment Regulations which provides for child benefit to be disregarded in calculation of income, except in certain specified circumstances. The amendment adds references to “qualifying young person” in order to reflect the amendment to the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, which provides that child benefit is now payable in respect of both children and certain young persons.

Personal Expenses Allowance

4. The new PEA prescribed amount, from 09 April 2007, is £20.45. 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

Subvention Payments

5. In certain circumstances a client who was resident in the Republic of Ireland but who – in accordance with Circular PRSC 2/96 - has since established residency in Northern Ireland may be eligible to receive subvention payments from their respective Health Service Executive in the Republic. Further details on the subvention scheme can be found at www.dohc.ie/public/information/health_services_for_older_people .
6. Trusts are reminded that subvention payments – which are made direct to the nursing home rather than the client – should be treated as notional income of the client in accordance with regulation 17(6) if the Assessment of Resources Regulations. Where a Trust is unsure if a subvention is in payment, a check should be made with the relevant Health Service Executive in the Republic. Contact details for this purpose are attached at Annex B.

Annex B

DUBLIN MID-LEINSTER (9)			
Former South Western Area (4) Former East Coast Area (3)	David Beegan	045-880429 01-6352377	David.beegan1@mailk.hse.ie
Laois/Offaly (1)	Anna Maher	057-9359625	anna.maher@mailq.hse.ie
Longford/Westmeath (1)	Patrick J. Chapman	043-43022	pat.chapman@mailq.hse.ie
SOUTH (9)			
Cork & Kerry (5)	Thomas Walsh	021-4921840	ThomasD.Walsh@mailp.hse.ie
South Tipperary (1)	John M. Power	052-77279	johnmichael.power@maila.hse.ie
Waterford (1)	Geraldine Fitzgerald	051-842963	geraldine.fitzgerald@maila.hse.ie
Carlow/Kilkenny (1)	Mary Harding	056-7784731	Mary.Harding@maila.hse.ie
Wexford (1)	Ann O'Byrne	053-9123522	ann.obyrne@maila.hse.ie
WEST (8)			
Limerick / Clare / North Tipperary (3)	Margaret Gilmartin	061-461486	margaret.gilmartin@mailh.hse.ie
Galway (1)	J. J. O'Kane	091-546312	jj.okane@mailn.hse.ie
Mayo (1)	Sean Gordon	094-9042308	sean.gordon@mailn.hse.ie
Roscommon (1)	Jacinta Dowd	090-6637500	mary.McDermottCollins@mailn.hse.ie
Sligo/Leitrim (1)	Rena Geoghegan	071-9155193 071-9620011	rena.geoghegan@mailb.hse.ie
Donegal (1)	Pat McClafferty	074-9189173	pat.mcclafferty@mailb.hse.ie