

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY R.S. KOVACS OF ST. SAVIOUR
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 30th OCTOBER 2023**

Question

“Regarding Government funding for wound dressings, will the Minister explain –

- (a) what financial support, if any, exists for individuals on Income Support and the conditions they have to meet to receive such support;
- (b) what financial support, if any, exists for individuals not on Income Support and the conditions they have to meet to receive such support;
- (c) how many current requests there are for financial support for wound dressings, and how this information is recorded;
- (d) what wound dressings or medical hosiery items, if any, are available on prescription, and the amount allocated to fund these prescriptions annually;
- (e) any other funding her department has allocated to either directly aid patients with purchasing wound dressings or establishing projects to facilitate this; and
- (f) what plans, if any, she has regarding the extension of the successful Medical Hosiery pilot scheme from 2020 that provided medical hosiery to 225 patients?”

Answer

- (a) what financial support, if any, exists for individuals on Income Support and the conditions they have to meet to receive such support;

The Income Support Special Payment Regulations is able to provide support for health costs where claimants have an urgent one-off need and no other means of meeting the cost. This includes dressings: “the cost of medical services and items supplied as a consequence of medical services.”

- (b) what financial support, if any, exists for individuals not on Income Support and the conditions they have to meet to receive such support;

The support identified in part (a) is also available to households that sit just outside Income Support eligibility. This includes households where one adult is within 6 months of meeting the residency conditions but meets all the other conditions. It also includes households that have a household income that is no more than 10% above the eligibility limit but meets all other conditions.

HCS provide dressings free of charge to patients whilst they are an inpatient and 3 days of supplies are given on discharge - to allow time for the patient to purchase supplies once home. Patients attending outpatient dressing clinics do not pay for the dressings that are applied at time of appointment. HCS also provide a budget to FNHC to support the cost of the medical hosiery project.

- (c) how many current requests there are for financial support for wound dressings, and how this information is recorded;

There are a small number of individuals receiving support for the cost of dressings through the Income Support Special Payment system at present (less than 5). This information is recorded as part of the overall record of the claim.

(d) what wound dressings or medical hosiery items, if any, are available on prescription, and the amount allocated to fund these prescriptions annually;

Wound dressings and medical hosiery are not included on the prescribed list held under the Health Insurance Law.

(e) any other funding her department has allocated to either directly aid patients with purchasing wound dressings or establishing projects to facilitate this; and

No additional funding has been allocated within the CLS budget to support the cost of dressings or establishing a project in this area, this is a matter that sits with the Minister for Health and Social Services.

(f) what plans, if any, she has regarding the extension of the successful Medical Hosiery pilot scheme from 2020 that provided medical hosiery to 225 patients?"

The medical hosiery scheme is administered through the Health and Community Services department. HCS officers have confirmed that this scheme is being maintained. There are no proposals or plans to expand the HCS medical hosiery scheme at this time. As Minister for Social Security, I have no plans in this area, as this matter sits with the Minister for Health and Social Services.