
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1997 No. 380

General Medical Services Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997

Part III

General medical services other than child health surveillance services, contraceptive services, maternity medical services and minor surgery services

Assignment of persons to doctors

20.—(1) Where—

- (a) a person who is not on the list of any doctor has been refused acceptance by a doctor for inclusion in his list; or
- (b) a person has been refused such acceptance by a doctor as a temporary resident,

he may apply to the Agency for assignment to a doctor, and the provisions of this regulation shall apply in relation to that application.

(2) An application under paragraph (1) shall be made in writing and shall be considered by the Agency, which shall assign the applicant to such doctor whose name is included in the medical list as it thinks fit, having regard to—

- (a) the respective distances between the person's residence and the practice premises of the doctors in the area;
- (b) whether within the previous six months the person has been removed from the list of any doctor in that area at the request of that doctor; and
- (c) such other circumstances, including those concerning the doctors in that area and their practices, as the Agency shall think relevant,

and shall notify the doctor accordingly.

(3) Nothing in paragraph (2) shall—

- (a) require a doctor to provide child health surveillance services, contraceptive services, maternity medical services or minor surgery services for a patient who is assigned to him unless, pursuant to regulation 27, 28, 34 or 36, as the case may be, he has accepted that patient for the provision of such services; or
- (b) enable the Agency to assign any person to a doctor whose list equals or exceeds the maximum number, without the consent of the Department.

(4) Where the Department refuses its consent for the purpose of paragraph (3)(b), and the Agency is satisfied, after due enquiry, that the person concerned still wishes to be assigned to a doctor, it shall, as soon as practicable, assign that person to another doctor or, as the case may be, seek the Department's consent, where required under paragraph (3)(b), for assignment to another doctor.

(5) The Agency may exempt from the liability to have persons assigned to him under this regulation, any doctor who applies to the Agency for that purpose and, in considering such an application, shall have regard to the doctor's age, state of health and the number of persons on his list and, where the application relates only to a specified person who has previously been removed

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from the list of the doctor, the circumstances of that removal; and the Agency shall notify any such doctor in writing of any decision under this paragraph.