
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations replace with amendments the Regulations providing for the making and recovery of charges for drugs and appliances (other than dental and optical appliances) supplied under the National Health Service Act 1977.

Accordingly, these Regulations provide for charges for drugs and appliances supplied by doctors and chemists providing pharmaceutical services (regulations 3 and 4) and by health authorities to patients who are not resident in hospital (regulation 5).

The Regulations provide in addition for—

- the reduction of a chemist's remuneration by the amount of the charge recoverable under the Regulations (regulation 3(6));
- a doctor providing pharmaceutical services to send each month a sum equal to the total of the charges recovered under the Regulations to the Family Practitioner Committee which pays him for the provision of general medical services (regulation 4(6));
- the remission of charges (regulations 3(2), 4(2), 5(2) and 6);
- the application for and the issue of exemption certificates (regulation 2(1) and 7);
- the payment for certificates granting exemption from charges otherwise exigible under these Regulations (regulation 8);
- the repayment of charges (regulation 9); and
- the revocation of the superceded Regulations on charges for drugs and appliances (regulation 11).

The amendments increase the charge for items on prescription or supplied to out-patients, and the monthly charge in respect of an oxygen concentrate supplied by a chemist, from £2.60 to £2.80. The charge for elastic stockings is increased from £2.60 to £2.80 each and for tights from £5.20 to £5.60. The charges for wigs are increased from £90.00 to £97.00 (human hair wig), from £58.00 to £62.00 (partial human hair wig) and from £22.00 to £24.00 (modacrylic wig). The charge for fabric supports is increased from £15.00 to £16.00 and the charge for surgical brassieres is increased from £11.00 to £12.00. The sums prescribed for the grant of pre-payment certificates of exemption from charges are increased from £13.50 to £14.50 for a four month certificate and from £37.50 to £40.00 for a twelve month certificate.

The other amendments of substance are that there is no longer a provision enabling charges to be paid by means of postage stamps and there is no minimum period within which a claim for repayment of a charge wrongly paid has to be made.