

CORRESPONDENCE

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK

20TH FEBRUARY, 2023

- Letters dated 24th January, 2023 from the Office of the Minister for Social Protection and 10th February, 2023 from the Higher Executive Officer, Department of Social Protection in reply to Notice of Motion from Members to write to the Minister for Social Protection to ask if widows / widowers can be considered for half rate illness benefit, once the applicant meets the criteria set out under the current scheme.
- Letters dated 24th January, 2023 from the Office of Chief Executive Officer, HSE and 9th February, 2023 from the Head of Service, Primary Care, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare in reply to Notice of Motion from Members to write to the Health Service Executive regarding the out of hours Limerick Doc based in Dooradoyle, asking them to upgrade this important service, because at present it is not a satisfactory service for its users.



Case Number: REPS-2023-35414

Mr. Mark Leahy
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City & County Council
Corporate Services
Corporate Headquarters
Merchant's Quay
Limerick.

Limerick City & County Council
25 JAN 2023
Received

24 January 2023

Dear Mr Leahy

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence to the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, regarding a resolution adopted at the meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, concerning half rate Illness Benefit in relation to recipients of Widows/Widowers Pensions.

Enquiries are being made and a further letter will issue to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Caroline Kilkenny
Private Secretary

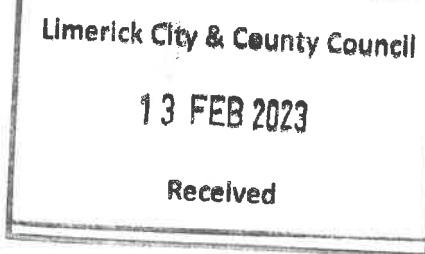
The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015
(details available on www.lobbying.ie)

Áras Mhic Dhíarmada, Sráid Stáras, Baile Átha Cliath 1, D01 WY03
Áras Mhic Dhíarmada, Store Street, Dublin 1, D01 WY03
minister@welfare.ie | +353 1 704 3000 | www.welfare.ie



Case Number: REPS-2023-35414

Mark Leahy
C/O Limerick City & County Council,
Corporate Headquarters,
Merchants Quay,
Limerick.



10 February 2023

Dear Mark Leahy,

I refer to the correspondence you submitted to the Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys T.D., on behalf of Limerick City & County Council in relation to the concurrent payment of Illness Benefit and Widow's Pension.

Illness Benefit is the main income support provided to those who cannot work due to illness of any kind and who are covered by social insurance.

Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's Pension (contributory) is a weekly social insurance payment to those who lost their spouse or civil partner and are covered by social insurance.

There is a general principle of one person, one payment, which applies across the social welfare system. Given the contingency-based nature of this system, it can happen that a person may experience more than one contingency at the same time, but generally they can receive only one payment. This principle is common to social security systems across the world.

As a general rule, people on Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's Pension cannot be in receipt of an overlapping second payment, for example Illness Benefit, at the same time. This does not affect the customer's entitlement to claim credited contributions, to maintain the continuity of their PRSI record, while they are unable to work due to illness.

If a customer is getting a reduced rate of Widow's/Widower's/Surviving Civil Partner's Pension, they may also get a reduced rate of Illness Benefit, so that the combined amount of both payments is not greater than the rate of Illness Benefit to which they are entitled. Further exceptions to the one person one payment and more information on the operations of the scheme are available at gov.ie.

With regard to additional supports, this department also provides Additional Needs Payment under our Supplementary Welfare Allowance scheme to help meet essential expenditure which a person could not reasonably be expected to meet out of their weekly income. This includes exceptional and



urgent needs payments, and certain supplements to assist with ongoing or recurring costs that cannot be met from a person's own resources and are deemed to be necessary.

The payment is available to anyone who needs it and qualifies, whether the person is currently on a social welfare payment or in employment. The payment amount will depend on a person's weekly household income, their outgoings and the type of assistance needed. Payments are made at the discretion of the Community Welfare Officers administering the scheme, considering all the circumstances of the case.

This department keeps its schemes and supports under review to make sure they continue to meet their objectives. Any changes to the current system would need to be considered in an overall policy and budgetary context.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Cheevers".

Helen Cheevers
Higher Executive Officer
Strategic Policy Unit
Áras Mhic Dhíarmada
Store Street
Dublin 1



Príomhoifigeach Feidhmiúcháin
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhise Sláinte
Urlár 1, Ospidéal an Dr Steevens'
Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8

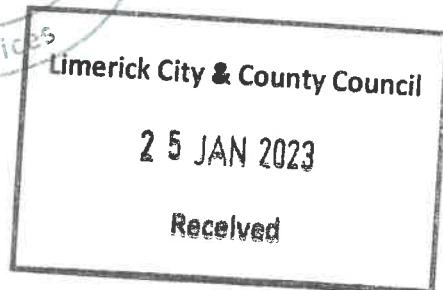
Chief Executive Officer
Health Service Executive
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24th January 2023

CEO Ref: 08245

Mr Mark Leahy
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City and County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick



Subject: Resolution Adopted at Meeting on the 16th January 2023

Dear Mr Leahy,

I wish to acknowledge with thanks your letter dated 23rd January 2023 to Mr Stephen Mulvany, CEO.

I wish to confirm that your correspondence has been referred to the HSE Parliamentary Affairs Division for their attention and processing through to the relevant management in the appropriate HSE section who will in turn issue a response directly to you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Hannigan
Suzanne Hannigan
Office of the Chief Executive Officer



Oifig um Cheannasaí Seirbhís do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín
Luimneach
Teil: 061 483226

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
Ballycummin Ave, Raheen Business Park, Raheen,
Limerick
Tel: 061 483226

9th February 2023

Mr. Mark Leahy
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services
Limerick City & County Council
Corporate Headquarters
Merchants Quay
Limerick

Re: REPDR/23/00511 Limerick Doc, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Dear Mr. Leahy,

I refer to your letter of 23rd January 2023 which was sent to Mr. Stephen Mulvany, CEO, regarding the above.

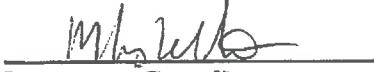
I note from your correspondence that a resolution was adopted at a Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 16th January 2023 regarding the Out of Hours GP service provided by Limerick Doc in Dooradoyle, Limerick. In this regard, I wish to advise you of the following:

The Primary Care Unit Manager has confirmed that Limerick City Doc is a committee made up of approx. 40 General Practitioners (GPs) in Limerick City and it employs Limerick Doc to provide a GP Out of Hours services for their patients. The Primary Care Unit Manager has also confirmed that the HSE Mid-West (CHO3) does not have a Service Level Agreement with Limerick Doc for the provision of GP services to GMS (medical card) patients.

The Primary Care Unit Manager has confirmed that she recently engaged with Limerick Doc following receipt of a national circular regarding Winter 2022/23 Support measures for GP Services. The circular referred to an arrangement, whereby, Limerick Doc would be requested to provide an additional 84 hours per week between the hours of 18:00 – 22:00 for an eight week period to facilitate the increase in consultations over the winter period. Limerick Doc reverted to the Primary Care Unit Manager to advise that they do not have the capacity (i.e. manpower) to meet this request.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,


Margaret Costello
Head of Service, Primary Care