

**From**  
**The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**  
**Cathy Harrison**



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte  
Máinnystrie O Poustie

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**BY EMAIL ONLY**

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Dear Colleague,

**MEDICINES OPTIMISATION REGIONAL EFFICIENCY (MORE) PROGRAMME**

**Call to action for a refocus on Medicines Optimisation and Cost effective Prescribing across the HSC**

The Permanent Secretary wrote to you previously in March 2018 asking for your support for cost effective prescribing policy to be embedded across the HSC. This is a call to action for a renewed focus on Medicines Optimisation to ensure the safe, clinically effective and cost-effective prescribing and supply of medicines in the HSC.

You will be aware of the Medicines Optimisation Regional Efficiency (MORE) Programme, which has successfully delivered in excess of £126m efficiencies in the medicines budget its first 4 years, 2016-2020. A further £12m savings is expected to be confirmed for 2020/21 against a £20m target. The deficit of £8m has been carried forward and added to the 2021/22 target which is £28m.

The HSC has faced many and unexpected challenges this past year in the on-going response to COVID-19. Already stretched resources have been significantly impacted by the pandemic, including the increase in volumes of medicines dispensed and the impact this has had on the cost and continuity of medicines supply.

It is imperative that during 2021/22, there is a return to cost effective medicines choices in support of the MORE Programme. The implementation and achievement of safe, clinically effective and cost-effective prescribing and medicines supply is in the interests of all patients and healthcare practitioners. It can help by reducing harm, improving adherence to medicines, lowering waste and freeing up resources to treat more patients thus obtaining value for money from vital healthcare resources. The attached policy statement entitled 'Enabling Medicines Optimisation to ensure the safe, clinically effective and cost-effective prescribing and supply of medicines in



the HSC', has some specific strategies and approaches to be adopted across the HSC to achieve this aim.

I would ask you to ensure that arrangements are in place within your respective organisations to facilitate collaborative working between all healthcare professionals involved in medicines management. The HSCB, PHA, Trusts, Community pharmacists, GP Federations and Allied Healthcare Professionals should work together to ensure the safe and cost effective use of medicines, support effective medication review, reduce inappropriate polypharmacy and optimise the use of medicines by patients.

A sum reflecting your organisation's contribution to cost effective choices savings will be included in the 2021/22 MORE Programme and any future efficiencies achieved through the MORE may be utilised to offset other HSC pressures.

Yours sincerely,



**Mrs Cathy Harrison**  
**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**

**Enc**

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