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MID-WESTERN
HEALTH BOARD

27 June 2002

To: Chairman & Each Member
Mid Western Health Board

Report No:
Item No on Agenda

For Meeting of the Board to be held on Friday 12th July 2002

Report on Back to School Clothing & Footwear Scheme 2002

Dear Member,

The Minister for Social Community & Family Affairs has announced details of the above scheme to be operated by the Board through the Community Welfare Service from 1st June to 30th September 2002 as in previous years. The main changes from last years scheme are **highlighted** and in *italics*

The rates of the allowance to be paid under this year's scheme have changed from last years rates. The amount payable in respect of 12 to 22 year old students has increased from £78.00 (□ 99.04) to □ 120.00 The amount in respect of primary school children remains at □ 80.00 (£63.00)

Eligibility

The Scheme is targeted at the school going population including Pre-School. The allowance is to be paid in respect of eligible children between ages 2 and 17 in respect of whom a child dependant allowance is payable and those between 18 and 22 who are attending full time education and in respect of whom a child dependant allowance is payable.

The benefits of the scheme will generally apply to school going dependant children, including pre-school children whose parents or guardians are recipients of:-

- a) Supplementary Welfare Allowance.
- b) Social Insurance Payments.
- c) Social Assistance Payments.
- d) Disabled Persons Maintenance Allowance.
- e) Infectious Diseases Maintenance Allowance.
- f) Disabled Persons Rehabilitation Maintenance Allowance.
- g) Family Income Supplement (FIS payment not assessable).
- h) Community Employment Projects and Back to Work Schemes, FAS ,etc (subject to an income limit of □ **317.43** per week excluding the BTW Payment and FIS Payment).

- i) Recognised Education and Training Courses e.g. VTOS, TLA (Note \square **317.43** Income Limit does not apply to the BTEA scheme **and assessment is under standard SWA Rules**).
- j) Pensions paid by DSS.
- k) Non-craft, full-time, FAS training schemes – Cert, LES training schemes.

The allowance will only be paid to applicants who satisfy all the conditions of entitlement.

Special conditions apply to approved Employment Scheme participants, Back to Education participants, Youthreach and Jobs Initiative Scheme participants and people involved in trade disputes –

The BTSCFA does not apply to foster children as the financial support available to foster parents from the Departments of Health & Children and Education & Science includes assistance with the cost of clothing and footwear for the foster child.

The Orphan's Pension, which is a basic social welfare payment, is payable to the guardian and is intended to cover the child's cost of living, including food and clothing. Accordingly, the BSCFA does not apply where Orphan's Pension is in payment.

Income Limits 2002

In order to qualify, an applicant's income must not exceed the specified limits as set out below. The income limits for the Scheme for 2002 are based on the maximum rate of Contributory Old Age Pension (Under 80), plus \square **50.00** in the case of married and cohabitation couples and the maximum rate of survivors contributory pension (under 80), plus \square **50.00** for lone parents plus child dependant allowance in each case. **(The increase in "excess income" allowance from \square 5 to \square 50 should allow for increased eligibility.)**

Disregard of Income for:

- **Employment of a rehabilitative nature has increased to \square 120.00 from last year at £75.00 (\square 95.23)**
- **Family Income Supplement is not assessable**
- **Higher level education is not assessable**

| Couples | Income Limit |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 Child | \square 314.70 |
| 2 Children | \square 334.00 |
| 3 Children | \square 353.30 |
| 4 Children | \square 372.60 |
| 5 Children | \square 391.90 |
| 6 Children | \square 411.20 |
| 7 Children | \square 430.50 |
| 8 Children | \square 449.80 |
| 9 Children | \square 469.10 |
| 10 Children | \square 488.40 |
| 11 Children | \square 507.70 |

| Lone Parent | Income Limit |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Child | \square 216.40 |
| 2 Children | \square 238.00 |
| 3 Children | \square 259.60 |
| 4 Children | \square 281.20 |
| 5 Children | \square 302.80 |
| 6 Children | \square 324.40 |
| 7 Children | \square 346.00 |
| 8 Children | \square 367.60 |
| 9 Children | \square 389.20 |
| 10 Children | \square 410.80 |
| 11 Children | \square 432.40 |

Asylum Seekers in direct provision who receive **9.60** CDA are qualified under the Scheme and will receive Back to School Clothing and Footwear allowance in respect of qualified children.

Rates of Payment

The rates of payment are:

- 80.00** in respect of children aged 2 to 4
- 80.00** in respect of children aged 5 to 11
- 120.00** in respect of children aged 12 to 17
- 120.00** in respect of children aged 18 to 22

Children aged **11** who will be attending 2nd level in the coming year will be paid an ENP of **40.00** to allow them the higher rate.

Reduced payments cannot be made in any circumstances.

Retention of Secondary Benefits

Participants on Community Employment (CE), Job Initiative Schemes, Back to Work, Jobstart, Workplace, Back to Work Enterprise and Revenue Job Assist Schemes are eligible to receive payments under the Back to School Clothing & Footwear Scheme provided:-

- (a) Their gross household income does not exceed **317.43** per week
- (b) They satisfy the conditions set out in SWA Circular **01/02**.

With effect from 6/4/2000 Back to Work Allowance and Family Income Supplement are disregarded for the purposes of the **317.43** p.w. income limit in the case of applicants who are participants of Employment Schemes as outlined in Circular 06/00.

Entitlement to retain Secondary Benefits including Back to School Allowance was extended to Job Initiative participants with effect from 6/4/00 and refers to those already on Job Initiative prior to 6/4/00 and new participants.

Participants on Jobstart may retain entitlement to Secondary benefits which includes Back to School Clothing & Footwear for a maximum of 12 months (see circular 03/01).

Applications and Payment

It is intended to implement payment during **June/July/August 2002**. Late applications will be dealt with, up to 30th September, 2002.

Applications for the scheme may be made to the **Community Welfare Officers** at any of the Health Centres and locations attended by them.

Arrangements have been put in place to send an application form to anyone who received a payment under the 2001 Scheme.

Claimants who are refused will be notified in writing as to the reason for refusal. Persons unhappy with refusal can appeal to the Appeals Officer, Mid-Western Health Board, St. Joseph's Hospital, Mulgrave Street, Limerick.

In order to facilitate the initial rush of applications Special Clinics were arranged by Community Welfare Service management for the weeks up to 10th July 2001 to deal with Back to School applications exclusively.

These are as follows:

| VENUE/LOCATION | TIME | DATES |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| O' Malley Park Health Centre | Mondays 10:00 – 11:00 | 17/6, 24/6, 1/7, 8/7 |
| St. Brendan's Health Centre | Mondays 2:00 – 3:00 | 17/6, 24/6, 1/7, 8/7 |
| Ballynanty Health Centre | Wednesdays 2.30 – 3.30 | 19/6, 26/6, 3/7, 10/7 |
| Moyross Health Centre | Wednesdays 2.30 – 3.30 | 19/6, 26/6, 3/7, 10/7 |
| Roxtown Health Centre | Mondays 10:00 – 11:00 | 17/6, 24/6, 1/7, 8/7 |
| Newcastle West Health Centre | Mondays 11:00 – 12:00 | 17/6, 24/6, 1/7, 8/7 |
| Nenagh Health Centre | Mondays 10:00 – 11:30 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 |
| Thurles Health Centre | Mondays 10:00 – 11:00 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 |
| Templemore Health Centre | Tuesdays 2:30 – 3:30 | 11/6, 18/6, 25/6 |
| Roscrea Health Centre | Mondays 10:00 – 11:00 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 |
| Shannon | Mondays 11.00 – 12.00 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 & 1/7 |
| Kilrush | Mondays 11.00 – 12.00 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 & 1/7 |
| Ennis | Mondays 11.00 – 12.00 | 10/6, 17/6, 24/6 & 1/7 |

Applicants should complete and return forms as soon as possible to facilitate the early payment of their allowances. It should be noted that applications will be taken at normal clinic times after the date of 10th July.

Applications outside the scope of the Scheme

Applications for assistance which are outside the terms of the Scheme may be considered under Section 181 Exceptional Needs Payments of the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme.

Statistics of the Scheme

| Year | No of Families | No. of children | Expenditure on Allowances |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1995 | 8453 | 20,046 | £ 950,765 |
| 1996 | 8695 | 20,884 | £1,048,794 |
| 1997 | 8141 | 19,067 | £ 958,330 |
| 1998 | 7330 | 16,900 | £ 851,592 |
| 1999 | 6811 | 15,386 | £ 770,702 |
| 2000 | 6140 | 13,641 | £ 955,266 |
| 2001 | 5,551 | 12,320 | £ 851,910 |

Seamus Woods
A/Regional Manager