



Emigrant Support Service

January 2018 – Issue 192

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**Thinking of returning
or moving to Ireland?**

Get in touch



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From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings,

Here's wishing all of you had a lovely Christmas and a great new year so far. Thank you to those who sent us the lovely Christmas cards and New Year greetings.

As the days begin to get longer we can see the daffodils already beginning to emerge and spring approaches full of new life and hope. It's been a hard winter what with a reported surge in influenza cases and with more than one strain around to bamboozle the flu vaccine. These flu causing viruses come every year from places such as China and Australia. As the strains are constantly mutating, it is impossible to predict what will be the dominant strain and so it's difficult to ensure an effective flu vaccine is available to prevent people getting the flu altogether.

While the vaccine is not 100% effective this year, it does save people from a bad flu and maybe hospital, or worse, from dying. A number of people have already died in Ireland as predicted from the flu. The hospitalisation rate is at an all-time high as incidences peak about now.

There would have been many more deaths were it not for the seasonal flu shot which works if given at least two weeks before contact with the flu virus. Best to avoid crowded places as it is easily spread by infected people coughing and not covering their mouth and nose with a tissue. It is spread easily by hands contaminated by the influenza virus so even shaking hands with someone can give you the flu. That's why regular hand washing is essential and taking care at the first onset of dry cough and generalised aching and fever and malaise. The cough can last for two weeks and antibiotics are not indicated unless there's the complication of a secondary bacterial infection. The old, young, immune-suppressed, and pregnant are those who need to take particular care. Staying at home means the virus is not spread around further. Paracetamol will take care of a high temperature. Seeking early medical advice for those at risk who are not improving is always advisable.

So long for now,

Dr. Jerry Cowley





Feedback on our services

Whether you are involved in an agency abroad, a client of Safe Home or just someone with an interest in the work that we do, we are asking that you get in touch with us to give your opinion and feedback.

What do you feel we do well, what can we do even better?

Your input may help others in the future. **Please contact the Safe Home office or complete and return our feedback form, via our website:**

<http://www.safehomeireland.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Feedback-Form.pdf>

Are you 70 years+? If yes, here are some pointers on the Irish Drivers Licence application/renewal process that may be of interest to you

All applications for a driver's licence for people aged 70 or over must be accompanied by a medical report. In general, a separate eyesight report is not required (as this will be covered in the medical report), **unless** your GP has specified a separate eyesight report is required.

Please be aware! Medical and eyesight reports are generally not covered by the Medical Card. Individual GP's will set their own discretionary charges for these reports.

The maximum duration a driver's licence for someone aged 70 or over can be issued for is 3 years.

For people aged 70 or over, the renewal or first time application for a full licence is free of charge. **However, applications to exchange a foreign licence for people over the age of 70 carry a fee of €35** (example: if exchanging an E.U or Australian licence for an Irish one)

Frequently Asked Question

Q. I need to apply for a copy of my Irish birth cert. Everyone seems to be directing me to apply online but I am not computer literate. **How can I get the certificate in the old-fashioned way?**

A: You can write to the **General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co Roscommon, F42 VX53** and they will post you out the relevant application form. Alternatively, you can ring the General Register office via **Tel: +353(0)90 6632900**

They can also provide contact details for the local civil register office if you prefer to access your cert from there. **Note!** You can also call in person or get a relative to drop into the General Register Office/any of the local register offices. If you call in person, the cost of the birth cert is €20. If you can prove (with a letter from the Department of Social Protection) that you require the cert for social welfare purposes, the cost is €1.

Note on applying for certificates online; The Civil Registration Service operates the official website www.certificates.ie for members of the public who wish to purchase certificates of birth, death, marriage, adoption, civil partnership or stillbirth on-line. Enquiries regarding applications made to this service should be made to the HSE, **Tel: 00353 (0)1 8638200 OR** via email to: certificates@hse.ie **Note!** Online applications will incur an additional charge to cover postage.

Housing opportunity – Clonbur, Co. Galway



North Connemara Social Services have asked us to spread the news to our Safe Home housing applicants about the Dun Mhuire housing scheme, based in Clonbur.

This will be of particular interest to emigrants (**aged 65yrs+**) who are originally from the North Connemara/South Mayo areas.

- The Dun Mhuire scheme consists of 8 single semi-detached houses
- It is situated at the rear of Clonbur Health Centre.
- The rent is €30 per week plus electricity and storage heating/stove heating.

The scheme is set in a rural location so is likely to be most suitable for people who can drive or those who may have close family in the area. If you would be interested in being considered for future vacancies, please contact the Safe Home office for an application form OR email Margaret Kineavy: mgtkineavy@eircom.net

The London Irish Centre's Older People's Service office that was previously based at 14A Quex Road in Kilburn is now closed. Instead, the Older Persons Outreach Worker, Mary Gleeson, will provide satellite advice sessions in the London area at the locations listed below.

Mondays and Fridays – Innisfree Housing Association, 190 Iverson Road, London NW6 2HL

Nearest Tube: West Hampstead (Jubilee) Bus Routes: 139, 328, C11

Tuesdays – SHP office 68 Kingsgate Road, Kilburn, London NW6 4TE (nearest site to Quex Road)

Nearest Tube: West Hampstead or Kilburn High Road (Jubilee) Bus Routes: 139, 328, 189

Wednesdays and Thursdays – London Irish Centre, 50-52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB

Nearest Tube: Camden Town (Northern) Nearest Rail: Camden Road Bus Routes: 274, 29, 253

Mary can be contacted by telephone on: **0207 3724389 OR 07947108467**

or via Email: marygleeson@lonirishcentre.org

Thinking about returning or moving to Ireland?

Our colleagues at [Crosscare Migrant Project](#) have recently launched their new website. Crosscare is a Dublin based organisation that provides free, confidential information and advocacy services for returning Irish emigrants, and others who have moved to Ireland.

They also provide a broader range of services that include information relevant to immigrants and vital pre-departure information for those who may be considering leaving Ireland.

Check out this easy to navigate, informative and comprehensive website on: www.migrantproject.ie

The Drugs Payment Scheme (DPS)

In our December Newsletter, we referred to the changes in the Drugs Payment Scheme that were implemented on 1st January 2018 as part of Budget 2018. As a follow up to that, we now include some additional information about the DPS and how it works.

What is the Drugs Payment Scheme? Under the Drugs Payment Scheme, an individual or family in Ireland must pay the first €134 each month for approved prescribed drugs, medicines or rental costs for CPAP/oxygen. This DPS is aimed at those who don't have a Medical Card and normally have to pay the full cost of their medication. It also applies to those who may only have a GP Visit Card. **Anyone ordinarily resident*in Ireland, and has a PPS number, can apply to join the scheme, regardless of family, financial circumstances or nationality.**

*Being ordinarily resident in Ireland means that you have been living here for a minimum of one year or that you intend to live here for a minimum of one year.

How to join the Scheme? You can apply online via the HSE (Health Service Executive) website: www.hse.ie or get a form from your pharmacy or Local Health Office. Completed forms should be submitted to your Local Health Office. Successful applicants will be sent a card for each eligible family member.

How does it work?

Please ensure that you present your DPS card to your pharmacist, each time items are being dispensed to you. You do not have to register with a particular Pharmacy for the scheme but for convenience it is advisable to use the same pharmacy in a particular month. That way your local pharmacy can ensure you will pay no more than the €134 monthly

Applying for the refund if using more than one pharmacy: If you or your family have paid more than €134 in more than one pharmacy on prescribed drugs or approved appliances, you can complete the refund form (DPSRI), available via www.hse.ie or local pharmacy and submit the completed form to: **DPS Refunds, PO Box 12012, Dublin**

Applying for a Medical Card – New online application platform

The H.S.E (Health Service Executive) recently launched the online application process to apply for a Medical Card. To apply online, applicants must be 16 years+, provided a PPSN and details of their income and relevant expenditure. To apply or find out more, please log on to; www.mymedicalcard.ie

For people who are not computer literate/prefer to use the paper application system, application forms for the Medical Card and G.P Visit Card are available from most G.P surgeries and Citizens Information/other advice agencies throughout the country. For people aged under 70, the relevant application form is a **MC1**. For people aged 70 years+, the relevant application form is **MC1(a)**

Safe Home Ireland is supported by the Emigrant Support Programme via:



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