

Memorandum by the Hon. Minister of HealthAn Act further to amend the National Assistance Act, 1956.

As promised by the Hon. Prime Minister on pages 22 and 23 of the last Financial Statement, I am enclosing the attached draft Bill for the approval of Ministers.

The object of this Bill is to amend the National Assistance Act, 1956 so as to provide for the following concessions under the said Act:-

Long-stay patients in the Hospital for Mental Diseases (Malta and Gozo), the St. Vincent de Paul Hospital, the St. John the Baptist Hospital, Gozo, and the Santo Spirito Hospital, who are not entitled to free hospitalization, will be kept free of charge after a lapse of eight weeks from the date of admission.

Long-stay patients in any general hospital who are not entitled to free hospitalization, will be allowed the following facilities in their fees:-

- (a) A reduction in their fees by one-third after the lapse of three months from the date of admission;
- (b) A reduction by two-thirds after the lapse of six months from the date of admission;
- (c) Total exemption of fees after the lapse of nine months from the date of admission;
- (d) If a patient is admitted to hospital (not as an out-patient) for the same ailment on more than one occasion, all periods of hospitalization during a period of twelve months, will be aggregated, for the purpose of the rebates contemplated in (a), (b) and (c).

If more than one member of the same household is in hospital in the same period, fees will be levied only in respect of the first case.

A person who is kept for treatment and at the same time also for research purposes and is certified as such by any consultant, will be given free hospital treatment and free medical aids, including drugs.

Patients suffering from notifiable diseases will be given free hospitalization.

Medical aid, grants, including prosthetic aids grants, will be given to patients suffering from leprosy and polio and their after effects.

5th November, 1963.

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entitled

AN ACT further to amend the National Assistance Act, 1956.

ENACTED by the Legislature of Malta.

Short title and commencement.

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the National Assistance (Amendment) Act, 1963 and shall be read and construed as one with the National Assistance Act, 1956, hereinafter referred to as "the principal Act".

(2) This Act shall come into force on

Amendment of Section 8 of the principal Act.

2. Section 8 of the principal Act is amended -

(a) by the addition to subsection (5) of the following proviso:-

"Provided that the condition set out in paragraph (b) of this subsection shall not apply -

- (i) in respect of any period during which such persons require treatment for any disease specified in the Ninth Schedule to this Act or the after effects of any such disease, or is a member of a household whose head is entitled to tuberculosis assistance or leprosy assistance;
- (ii) in respect of any period during which such person is kept in any hospital or institution maintained by the Government for a disease certified by the consultants in charge to be of special scientific interest and approved as such by the Minister in charge of the Medical and Health Department,
- (iii) in respect of a period of any length immediately following the first eight weeks from the date of admission of such person as an in-patient at the St. Vincent de Paul Hospital, or the Santo Spirito Hospital, or the St. John the Baptist or a hospital for mental diseases maintained by the Government; or
- (iv) in any case not falling within the foregoing subparagraphs of this proviso, in respect of a period of any length immediately following the first nine months from the date of admission of such person to any hospital or institution maintained by the Government."

(b) by the deletion of the proviso to subsection (6) and the subsection of the following proviso:-

"provided that the conditions set out in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this subsection shall not apply when the person concerned is -

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- (i) suffering from tuberculosis, leprosy or poliomyelitis or the after effects of any such disease, or from one of the diseases or conditions specified in the Third Schedule to this Act; or
- (ii) a member of a household in respect of sickness assistance, tuberculosis assistance or leprosy assistance."

Amendment of section 9 of the principal Act.

3. Section 9 of the principal Act is amended -

- (a) by the addition immediately after the proviso to subsection (3) of the following second proviso:-

"provided further that the daily rate assessed and chargeable in accordance with the foregoing proviso in respect of maintenance and treatment in a hospital or institution maintained by the Government -

- (i) shall be reduced by one third in respect of any continuous period of such maintenance and treatment after the end of three months and up to the end of six months from the date of admission;
- (ii) shall be reduced by two thirds in respect of any continuous period of such maintenance and treatment after the end of six months and up to the end of nine months from the date of admission; and
- (iii) shall be levied in respect of only one member of a household during any period in which such maintenance and treatment are afforded concurrently to two or more members of that household."

- (b) by the insertion after subsection (3) of the following subsections:-

"(3A) When a person is admitted as an in-patient for the same ailment on more than one occasion to a hospital or institution maintained by the Government, all periods of hospitalization during any period of twelve months shall be aggregated for the purpose of applying the reductions in the hospital rate required by sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) of the second proviso to subsection (3) of this section and the total exemption from hospital fees required by sub-paragraph (iv) of the proviso to subsection (5) of section 8 of this Act.

"(3B) If at the time of discharge of a person from hospital, a second member of the same household is being maintained and treated in the same or in another hospital or institution maintained by Government, the remaining period of hospitalisation of the second member shall,

for the purposes of the last preceding subsection, be considered and dealt with as a continuation of the period of hospitalization of the discharged member."

Amendment of section 25 of the principal Act.

4. Section 25 of the principal Act is amended by the deletion from subsection (1) of the words "Sixth and Seventh" and the substitution of the words "Sixth, Seventh and Ninth".

Addition of Schedule to the principal Act.

5. The principal Act is amended by the addition immediately after the Eighth Schedule of the Schedule set out in the Schedule hereto.

SCHEDULE

Section 5

NINTH SCHEDULE

Section 8

LIST OF DISEASES ENTITLING PERSONS SUFFERING THEREFROM TO FREE HOSPITALIZATION

1. Tuberculosis.
2. Poliomyelitis
3. Leprosy
4. Malignant diseases.

Objects and Reasons

The object of this Bill is to amend the National Assistance Act, 1956 so as to make provision for various concessions in respect of institutional relief and medical aids grant generally as outlined by the Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Planning and Finance on the occasion of his address on the Budget for the financial year 1963/64.