

MEMO FOR CABINETSickness Assistance payable to Households having more than one member suffering from a Scheduled Disease or Condition

The Umpire appointed in accordance with Section 18 of the National Assistance Act, 1956, has given his decision in an appeal which arose out of the claim of a head of a household, who was already receiving Sickness Assistance in respect of his son, for an additional allowance, i.e. double sickness assistance because he himself was suffering, as he claimed, from a scheduled condition or disease. The Umpire's interpretation of the relative provisions of the law was that such a person is entitled to receive sickness assistance in respect of two persons. In other words, the household should receive sickness assistance at the rate of 24s/- per week instead of 12s/-. In accordance with sub-section 5 of section 19 of the Act, this decision is final.

2. Sickness Assistance is payable in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of the Act, an extract from which is at Appendix 'A'. The list of diseases and conditions in respect of which sickness assistance is payable is given in Appendix 'B'.

3. Since the Act came into force in 1956, only one flat rate of sickness assistance has been paid to any household, irrespective of the number of persons affected. It may be inferred from this practice that this was the original intention. In view of this and of the circumstances resulting from the Umpire's decision, it is proposed that in a household where more than one person is affected by any of the scheduled conditions or diseases, the basic rate of 12s/- per week will be increased by 6s/- per week in respect of every additional person affected after the first one. For instance, a household where two persons are affected would receive sickness assistance at the rate of 18s/- per week. A somewhat similar arrangement exists in the case of Tuberculosis Assistance where the basic rate of 25s/- per week is increased by 5s/- per week in respect of every additional member of the household affected by the disease or who is particularly vulnerable to it.

4. This proposal was referred to the Ministry of Finance, Customs and Port on the 8th August, 1966 for their comments, with a request for urgent consideration. The cost of the above proposal cannot be estimated, but the statistics shown in Appendices marked 'C', 'D' and 'E' were furnished to that Ministry.

5. So far no reply has been received from the Ministry of Finance. In the meantime the Director of Social Services has no legal grounds for withholding claims for additional sickness assistance at the full rate in relation to the number of persons affected in a household. On the other hand, if such claims are allowed, it would then be difficult to amend the Act to make it less favourable.

6. In the circumstances Honourable Ministers are requested to agree to the amendment of the relative provisions of the National Assistance Act as proposed in paragraph 3 above.

24.9.66.

L-ARKIVI NAZZIONALI TA' MALTA

4



Extract from National Assistance Act

8. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, a head of a household shall be entitled to Sickness Assistance if he shows to the satisfaction of the Director that -

- (a) He or a member of the household is suffering from a disease, or is in a condition, mentioned in the Third Schedule to this Act for which he is not being treated in a hospital and which could be alleviated or cured by a special diet or regimen which requires an expenditure not normally incurred by the household; and
- (b) the total weekly means of his household do not exceed the scale rate for that household as determined by the Fourth Schedule to this Act; and
- (c) the aggregate capital value of the property of all members of the household does not exceed five hundred pounds, or where such property consists solely of the house of residence, seven hundred and fifty pounds.

APPENDIX 'B'

Third Schedule to the National Assistance Act, 1956

Diseases and Conditions in respect of which Sickness Assistance is payable.

1. Chronic renal impairment and the Nephrotic Syndrome;
2. Gastric and Duodenal Ulcer;
3. Malignant Diseases;
4. Cirrhosis of the Liver;
5. Serious complications from acute infectious diseases;
6. Serious complications arising from Diabetes;
7. Congestive Heart failure;
8. Rheumatoid Arthritis and Collagen Diseases;
9. Progressive Muscular Atrophy;
10. Mental Deficiency;
11. Pregnancy - the last twelve weeks preceding children.

L-ARKIJI NAZZJONALI TA' MALTA

APPENDIX C

1965

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SICKNESS ASSISTANCE

Month	Nephritis	Gastric and Duodenal Ulcer	Malignant Disease	Cirrhosis of the Liver	Infectious Disease	Diabetes	Total
As on 31st December 1964	185	64	103	57	39	451	927
January	197	64	107	60	41	463	935
February	194	61	102	64	37	458	936
March	195	58	105	61	36	466	939
April	192	64	103	60	41	478	964
May	168	52	103	60	42	491	964

Total Monthly Payments

<u>1964</u>	
December	£8,125
<u>1965</u>	
January	£1,708
February	£2,167
March	£1,091
April	£1,065
May	£1,090



L-ARKKIVI NAZZJONALI TA' MALTA

1995

APPENDIX D

NUMBERS OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SICKNESS ASSISTANCE

Month	Nephritis	Gastric Ulcer	Malignant Disease	Cirrhosis of the Liver	Infectious Disease	Diabetes	Heart Failure	Arthritis and Collagen Disease	Muscular Atrophy	Mental Deficiency	Pregnancy	Total
June	214	89	106	85	41	431	1	1	1	5	-	1,000
July	219	91	115	87	41	500	22	11	4	29	15	1,059
August	232	83	141	90	41	530	26	27	4	39	50	1,572
September	257	100	170	90	47	714	302	72	20	32	01	1,903
October	271	102	183	80	40	604	291	26	20	33	108	2,100
November	280	103	193	87	40	830	411	105	25	80	112	2,523
December	296	100	200	99	40	883	501	107	20	04	105	2,519

Total Monthly Payments

<u>1995</u> June	£2,811
July	£2,892
August	£3,522
September	£9,812
October	£6,859
November	£7,305
December	£6,008

L-ARKIVJI NAZZJONALI TA' MALTA

APPENDIX B

1936

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SICKNESS ASSISTANCE

Month	Nephritis	Gastric and Duodenal Ulcer	Malignant Disease	Cirrhosis of the Liver	Infectious Diseases	Heart Disease	Arthritis and Collagen Disease	Muscular Atrophy	Mental Deficiency	Pregnancy	Total
As at end of December 1935	298	108	500	38	49	883	491	107	84	105	2,419
January	316	108	212	70	49	212	839	123	90	101	2,543
February	345	119	223	73	81	843	813	146	106	109	2,773
March	350	120	232	76	82	872	868	130	119	102	2,907
April	371	116	245	74	82	1,002	751	182	135	111	3,087
May	378	121	255	76	82	1,019	850	202	144	108	3,106

Total Monthly Payments

1936	December	£6,066
1936	January	£6,083
	February	£8,072
	March	£7,220
	April	£7,513
	May	£7,816