



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Health Department

NHS
MEL(2000)3

Dear Colleague

PRIORITY TREATMENT FOR WAR PENSIONERS

1. This letter has been issued as a reminder about the arrangements for priority treatment of war pensioners. With effect from 29 July 1996 the term "War Pensioner" includes those people who were injured or disabled as a result of service in the Armed Forces of the Crown either before 4 August 1914 or between 1 October 1921 and 2 September 1939. NHS MEL(1996)73 refers.

Action

2. General Managers and NHS Trust Chief Executives should ensure that general practitioners and relevant hospital staff are reminded of the arrangements for priority treatment.

Background

3. In 1953 hospitals run by the Ministry of Pensions for the treatment of war pensioners were transferred to the NHS. The Government gave an undertaking that there would be priority examination and treatment for war pensioners in NHS hospitals for the condition or conditions for which the war pensioners received a pension or gratuity.

4. In accordance with this undertaking, NHS hospitals, including NHS Trust hospitals, should give priority to war pensioners both as out-patients and in-patients for examinations or treatment which relates to the condition or conditions for which they receive a pension or received a gratuity (unless there is an emergency case or another case demands clinical priority). Priority should not be given for unrelated conditions.

5. Referrals for treatment should make it clear that the patient is a war pensioner and requires treatment for the condition or conditions for which the war pensioner was given a pension or gratuity.

28th January 2000

Addresses

For action

General Managers, Health Boards
Chief Executives, NHS Trusts
General Manager, Common Services
Agency
General Manager, State Hospitals
Board for Scotland

For information

Local Health Councils
General Manager, Health Education
Board for Scotland
Executive Director, SCPMDE

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6. NHS MEL(1998)10 dated 17 February 1998, set out the position regarding the payment of treatment costs and travelling expenses for war pensioners when they receive treatment for an accepted war disablement.

Yours sincerely

KEVIN WOODS
Director of Strategy and Performance Management

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