



**AN BILLE SLAINTE AGUS COIREALA MEABHAIR-GHALAR
(LEASU), 1965
HEALTH AND MENTAL TREATMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL,
1965**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. Those in the following categories are entitled to avail themselves of the general institutional and specialist services, the mental treatment service and the maternity and infant care service under the Health Acts, either free or at moderate charges:—

- (a) persons insured under the Social Welfare Acts (the qualifying condition is that one contribution has been paid, payable or credited in the period commencing at the beginning of the last contribution year but one, or that the person is a voluntary contributor under the Acts), and their dependants;
- (b) other persons over sixteen years of age whose yearly means, as defined in the Acts, are less than £800, and their dependants;
- (c) other persons over sixteen years of age whose yearly means are, in the opinion of the health authority, derived wholly or mainly from farming, the rateable valuation of the farm or farms (including the buildings thereon) being £50 or less, and their dependants.

Other persons who can demonstrate undue hardship may be given the services normally reserved to those in these three categories.

2. All manual workers, irrespective of their income, and non-manual workers whose remuneration did not exceed £800 a year, were until recently insurable under the Social Welfare Acts, with certain specified exceptions. Under section 6 of the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1965, the limit for inclusion of non-manual workers was raised to £1,200 a year from 6 September, 1965. This change, without any amendment of the Health Acts, has conferred eligibility for the health services mentioned above on this wider group of insured persons.

3. The purpose of the Health and Mental Treatment (Amendment) Bill, 1965 is to make corresponding increases in the categories specified at (b) and (c) above. The limit for category (b) will be increased to £1,200 a year and the valuation limit for farmers from £50 to £60. This latter figure corresponds approximately to the increase in real values in the other limits, as £800 at 1958 prices is approximately equivalent to £1,000 now, so that the increase to £1,200 would represent an increase at constant money values of only 20%.

4. The yearly means of a married person in category (b) above (which is constituted mainly of self-employed persons, such as shopkeepers, etc.) is calculated by adding to the person's means the means of the wife (or husband) if resident with the applicant and the means of any unmarried son or daughter resident in the house-

