



Statement by the Irish Pharmacy Union

IPU Friday 12 December 2025: Phased dispensing and the supply of medicines in Monitored Dosage Systems are separate and distinct services, although some patients may use both. It is important to clarify that the supply of medicines in Monitored Dosage Systems (blister packs) is not currently reimbursed by the State and has been a private service, with proportionate fees set by individual pharmacies.

The Community Pharmacy Agreement outlines a commitment to modernise and expand the role of community pharmacy within Ireland's healthcare system. It will support pharmacists to contribute more effectively to national health priorities through structured engagement, sustainable funding and integrated service delivery.

The IPU has been extensively engaging with the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive on the implementation of measures under the Agreement. Due to increased pressures on pharmacies arising from an earlier-than-expected flu season, high demand for vaccination services and significant uptake of the new Common Conditions Service, it has been agreed to pause the introduction of changes to the Phased Dispensing Arrangement until later in Q1 2026.

The arrangements for the Monitored Dosage System will not change and in early 2026, community pharmacists will engage with patients in a structured way to assess individual medicines optimisation needs and to provide personalised guidance and support tailored to each patient's requirements.

The Community Pharmacy Agreement includes a dedicated fund to support the improvement and expansion of medicines optimisation services. It also provides for planned changes to certain Community Drug Schemes, including the Phased Dispensing Arrangement.

Ends

Notes to editor

Phased dispensing involves supplying medicines in smaller, scheduled quantities to support safe use and regular review, while MDS involves organising medicines into trays or blister packs to assist patients in taking the correct dose at the correct time and is one of the ways pharmacists assist patients with adherence to their medicines.