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Factsheet for case **AT-2020-12/583**

Electronic prescriptions launched

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Country	Austria, applies nationwide
Time period	Temporary, started on 18 March 2020
Type	Legislation or other statutory regulation
Category	Measures to prevent social hardship – Access to healthcare
Case created	14 April 2020 (updated 15 April 2020)

Background Information

In order to keep visits to doctors' offices to a minimum during the Covid-19 pandemic, Austria started to use electronic recipes on 18 March 2020. This quick initiation was possible because the country had already prepared to start electronic recipes in a pilot project in two political districts in the regional province in Carinthia in April 2020. However, according to the Austrian Chamber of Doctors, this measure will be quit again after the crisis is over. The measure is targeted especially to those who need long-term medication. In addition to the electronic prescription, further measures for the period of the CoV pandemic were introduced, including e.g. the suspension of the authorization requirement (chief physician requirement) for many medications. Furthermore, ambulance transports are free of charge until further notice; the same applies to medical aids and aids up to a total of 1,500 euros as well as X-ray and cross-sectional examinations. Sickness reports to doctors are currently also possible by telephone. Doctors, psychotherapists and midwives can also invoice necessary telemedical treatments (via Skype, video conference or telephone) such as a service performed in the ordination.

Content of measure

The procedure of getting an electronic recipe is that the patient calls the doctor's office. The doctor issues the prescription and saves it in the patient's (pre-existing) e-medication. The information reaches the pharmacy automatically via e-medication. There, the patients can either pick up the medicine themselves or send someone.

In cases where e-medication is not working or is not yet working, doctors were also given the opportunity to send prescriptions to the pharmacies by fax or email.

The electronic prescription is primarily intended to help older people and people with previous illnesses to avoid medical practices as best they can given the spread of coronavirus in Austria. Accordingly, the measure is mainly intended for people with long-term medication.

However, in principle, it is also possible that the doctor prescribes medication for acute cases.

Use of measure

unknown

Actors, target groups and funding

Actors	Target groups	Funding
Social insurance	other workers & citizens	No special funding required

Social partners

Role of social partners	Negotiated
Form of involvement	Bi-or tripartite social dialogue bodies

The social insurance's administrative board consists of social partner and government representatives, so they are basically involved in all decisions. In this case, the process (i.e. the pre-existing project of implementing e-recipes) was sped up due to the pandemic. No specific funds (above the ones which were set aside for this anyway) were needed.

Sectors and occupations

This case is not sector-specific.

This case is not occupation-specific.

Sources

- 17 March 2020: Electronic recipe - how it works (orf.at)