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Emergency medical cards

There are some emergency situations where we can help you outside of the normal medical card application process.

You can get a medical card if you:

- have a terminal illness and have been told you have 24 months or less to live
- are receiving end-of-life treatment
- need urgent ongoing care and urgently need a medical card

If you have a terminal illness and have been told you have 24 months or less to live

You will get a medical card if you have a terminal illness and have been told you have 24 months or less to live.

What will happen

1. Your hospital consultant will send us a completed [terminal illness emergency medical card application form - MC1t \(PDF, 219KB, 4 pages\)](#). This states that you have a terminal illness and have 24 months or less to live.
2. Your medical card number will be active on the system within 24 hours of your application being processed.

We will never review your card and your card will never expire.

If you are receiving end-of-life treatment

You will get a medical card immediately if you have a terminal illness and you are receiving end-of-life treatment. End-of-life treatment means you have been told you have less than 12 months left to live.

What will happen

1. Your social worker, hospital consultant or GP will send us a medical report and a completed [end of life care medical card application form - MC1e \(PDF, 476KB, 2 pages\)](#).
2. One of our medical officers will look at your case straight away - medical officers are HSE medical doctors.
3. Your medical card number will be active on the system within 24 hours of your application being processed.

We will never review your card and your card will never expire.

If you need urgent ongoing care

You may need urgent ongoing care and need a medical card sooner than the normal processing time. If you do, we can give you a temporary medical card for 6 months.

You will still need to [apply for a standard means-tested medical card](#) before your temporary card expires within 6 months. We will write to you to remind you to do this.

What will happen

1. Your social worker, hospital consultant or GP will send us a medical report and a completed application form (MC1e).
2. One of our medical officers will look at your case straight away - medical officers are HSE medical doctors.
3. Your medical card number will be active on the system within 24 hours of your application being processed.
4. You [apply for a standard means-tested medical card](#) before your temporary card expires within 6 months.

When you will get your card

When your application has been processed, your medical card number will be active within 24 hours. Your GP, pharmacy and hospital staff will see your card is active on their systems. This means you can access medical card services while you wait for your card in the post.

You will get your card in the post within 10 working days.

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