



HEALTHCARE, LIFE SCIENCES & PHARMACEUTICALS

Extension of the validity period of prescriptions for medicines and complementary services

Ministerial Order 97/2023 was published on 31 March and it introduces the fifth amendment to Ministerial Order 224/2015 of 27 July. The new ministerial order establishes the legal framework for the prescription and dispensation of medicines and health product, and it defines the obligations regarding information to be provided to health service users. It also introduces the first amendment to Ministerial Order 126/2018 of 8 May, which defines the rules for the prescription, registration and availability of results of complementary diagnostic tests and therapy, and regulates the billing of their providers to the National Health Service.

Previously, the **validity period of prescriptions for medicines** was **30 days** and this has now been extended to **12 months**. **Prescriptions for complementary diagnostic test and therapy** were valid for **6 months** and have now been extended to **12 months**. The possibility of renewing prescriptions for medicines has been maintained for up to three copies, but the validity has been extended from 6 months to 12 months.

This change was one of the measures proposed by the Executive Directorate of the National Health Service, I.P. ("DE-SNS, I.P.") in response to the **need to improve the provision of primary care**, including the removal of bureaucracy through approaches **aimed at facilitating access to the National Health Service** and **reducing the administrative burden on general practitioners and family doctors**.

The Ministerial Order came into force on 1 April 2023, but systems will be adapted to these changes within 90 days of this date. ■

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