

HEALTHCARE, LIFE SCIENCES & PHARMACEUTICALS

Local dispensing of medicines

Decree-Law 138/2023 of 29 December entered into force on 30 December and this new law has created the local dispensing system for medicines and other health products prescribed to hospital outpatients in establishments and departments of the Portuguese National Health Service (SNS):

- a) The list of medicines and health products prescribed to hospital outpatients that are part of the local dispensing system is approved by order of the member of the Government responsible for health.
- b) Local dispensing of medicines and health products may take place in SNS establishments and departments, pharmacies and, in exceptional and properly justified cases, in other dispensing places¹.
- c) Eligible users who opt for the local dispensing scheme are supported by a hospital pharmacy consultation and by the pharmacist at the local dispensing site. The pharmacists in the hospital pharmaceutical departments and in the local dispensing centres record the relevant information in the user's clinical file and communicate via an information system developed for this purpose.
- d) Medicines and health products to be dispensed under the local dispensing system are stored in a central warehouse provided by the Hospital Common Use Service (SUCH). The distribution of these medicines from the central warehouse to the local dispensing points is carried out by a pharmaceutical wholesaler.
- e) The remuneration for the local dispensing service² of one or more medicines and health products is a fixed amount of €11.96 (VAT exempt) per dispensing episode, shared between the pharmacy chosen by the user, the wholesale distributor and the entity responsible for the central warehouse. ■

Local dispensing of medicines and health products prescribed to hospital outpatients may take place in establishments and departments of the SNS and in Pharmacies.

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1 The model hospital regulation for local dispensing and the requirements for local dispensing points are set out in Ministerial Order 106/2024/1 of 14 March.

2 The financing conditions for the local dispensing of medicines and health products are laid down in Ministerial Order 104/2024/1 of 14 March.