



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Changes to giving free prescriptions to people aged 60 and over



Tell us what you think

Our ideas for changing things



A **prescription** is a note your doctor writes so you can get the medicine you need.



Many people have to pay to get the medicine on their prescriptions.



Anyone aged 60 and older can get free prescriptions for medicine.



We are thinking about changing this.

We have **2 ideas** about how to change it.

Idea 1

From a date we say:



- you will have to be 66 and older to get free prescriptions



60 → 65

- if you are aged 60 to 65 you will have to start paying for your prescriptions



When you are 66 your prescription will be free again.



If you get free prescriptions for another reason, you will keep on getting this.



Good things about idea 1

- the NHS would get more money from prescriptions



- the NHS will get the extra money quickly. More people will have to pay for prescriptions straight away



Not so good things about idea 1:

- people could get confused about the new rules



- people may think they can still get free prescriptions at age 60. They may not pay for their prescription when they should



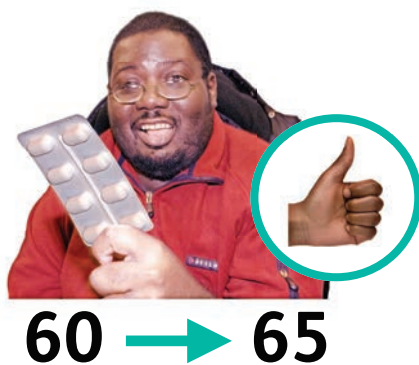
If this happens people will still be asked to pay for the prescription. They might also have to pay some extra money. This is called a **penalty charge**.



Idea 2

From a date we say:

- you will have to be 66 and older to get free prescriptions



- if you are aged 60 to 65 and already getting free prescriptions, you will keep getting them for free



- people aged 59 and younger will have to wait until they are 66 to get free prescriptions



If you get free prescriptions for another reason you will keep on getting this.



60 → 65

Good things about idea 2:

- people aged 60 to 65 will keep getting free prescriptions



- people will have time to get used to the idea of free prescriptions at age 66 instead of 60



- it will give the Department of Health and Social Care time to see how the change affects people



- the NHS would get more money from prescriptions

Not so good things about idea 2



- people could get confused about the new rules

Other things that may happen if we use idea 1 or idea 2



If people have to wait until 66 for free prescriptions they may not:



- take medicines because it costs too much



- take medicines properly. People may take less medicine to make it last longer. This means they would not have to pay as much.



- take medicines that help stop you from getting ill

For example: if someone needs an inhaler, they may not use it as often as they should.



If people do not take their medicines properly more people may have to:

- go into hospital



- go to A&E



- see their doctor



We want to know what you think about our ideas.



Please answer our questions and send your answers back to us.



We will use all of the answers to help us choose **idea 1** or **idea 2**.



When we have chosen which idea to use, we will pick a start date.

The start date will be when the change to prescription costs will start.