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Deputy Browne
Leinster House
Dublin 2.

6th June 2018

PQ Ref 22006/18 To ask the Minister for Health the criteria the HSE warrants mental health supports as valid for patients using maternity services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Browne,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Please forgive the delay in responding to your question.

As outlined in the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services, Model of Care for Ireland, perinatal mental health disorders are those which complicate pregnancy and the first postnatal year. This may include both new onset and a relapse or reoccurrence of pre-existing disorders.

Many of the services and professionals involved in Perinatal Mental Health Services are concerned with the prevention, detection and management of perinatal mental health problems that complicate pregnancy and the postnatal year. These services and healthcare professionals include; health promotion; general practitioners; practice nurses; public health nurses; the primary care team; midwives; obstetricians; secondary care community and inpatient mental health services and specialist perinatal mental health services. Other services such as addiction and child protection may also be involved. Given the various services and professionals involved in maternity care, access to Perinatal Mental Health Services is not limited to a defined criteria but based on clinical judgment.

The National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) function to implement the National Maternity Strategy 2016-2026, integrating the essential components of Maternity Services whether at individual hospital, maternity network or CHO level.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kilian McGrane'.

Kilian McGrane
National Programme Director, National Women and Infants Health Programme