



12/02/2019

Deputy Gerry Adams,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

PQ 6611/19 To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the high cost of the batteries required to operate cochlear implants; if the batteries are covered by a medical card; and if not, if funding is available to cover the cost

-Gerry Adams

Dear Deputy Adams,

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.

Cochlear implant sound processors can use both high powered disposable zinc air batteries and rechargeable ones, the latter being more environmentally friendly.

Patients who receive cochlear implant(s) are provided at their initial switch on with 2 rechargeable batteries per sound processor. The life span of each battery is approximately 12 months. In other words, unilateral Cochlear Implant users would need to buy 1 battery per year and bilateral Cochlear Implant users 2 batteries per year. The cost for replacement of the rechargeable battery ranges from Euro 171.00 to Euro 241, depending upon the type of sound processor.

The HSE Audiology service does not receive funding for the provision of batteries for clients with medical cards, for any hearing device provided. For parents / guardians of children who have received cochlear implant(s), the Domiciliary Care Allowance (Euro 309.50/month) can be used to cover the costs related to battery purchase.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siobhán McArdle'.

Siobhán McArdle,
Head of Operations Primary Care,
Community Operations