



Oifig an Straitéis Chúraim Phríomha agus an Phleanála
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05 July, 2019.

PQ Number: 26274/19

Ms Louise O'Reilly, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your Parliamentary Question below which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

PQ 26274/19: "To ask the Minister for Health his plans to increase the capacity for bariatric surgery and earlier and more systematic activity in primary care to enable earlier and accurate diagnosis and lifestyle coaching directed at obesogenic persons or families through increasing the number of general practitioners and practice nurses in the health service" - Louise O'Reilly.

The National Clinical Obesity Programme was established by HSE and RCPI in 2017. The Clinical Advisory Group, chaired by Dr. Brendan O'Shea (ICGP) and Prof Donal O'Shea (Clinical Lead) are in the process of scoping and specifying a service design for an integrated model of weight management services across primary and acute care.

Components of this include:

- systemic integration of *Making Every Contact Count* into everyday practice;
- integration of BMI into decision-making framework of electronic referral pathway for patients from primary to acute care;
- Growth monitoring as part of Health & Wellbeing checks for babies and children.

Practices Nurses and GPs' are being supported to engage patients in discussion on lifestyles through the provision of standardised professional education and development including:

- National Healthy Childhood training programme available on www.hseland.ie
- *Making Every Contact Count* training programme available on www.hse.ie/makeeverycontactcount



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Information for parents and carers to better prevent childhood obesity is available on www.mychild.ie and through the joint HSE & safefood public campaign **START** www.makeastart.ie.

The 'Healthy Weight for Ireland 2016-2025 Obesity Policy and Action Plan' recommended the development of specialist, consultant-led multidisciplinary care, based on the chosen model of care and the RCPI report, on an equitable geographic basis (i.e one centre within each hospital group) and one for children at a national level. The intention over time is to develop the Bariatric services on a more equitable basis on accordance with the recommendations of the Policy Group.

In the meantime, the Ireland East Hospital Group is funded for the provision of 30 bariatric surgeries each year carried out in St Vincent's University Hospital, and the Saolta Group carries out a similar number annually. In addition, a number of cases are funded each year but the National Treatment Purchase Fund – i.e. 29 in 2018 and 11 cases so far in 2019.

Weight management programmes are also available in each of the hospital groups and these provide dietary and lifestyle interventions to patients. Proposals for the Implementation of the Action Plan are being considered as developments in 2020 including funding for additional surgeries in Ireland East and Saolta Hospital group.

The "GP Agreement 2019" includes a commitment to ensure that MECC is applied to all patients who come to the GP surgery, as appropriate. In addition, a Chronic Disease Management Programme (Diabetes, Asthma, COPD & Cardiovascular Disease) for GMS/GPVC patients will commence in 2020 and will be rolled out to adult patients over a 4-year period, an additional WTE of 247 Practices Nurses have been resourced in order to facilitate the roll-out of the Programme. It is expected that the benefits of the new agreement will attract GPs and practice nurses and build capacity in the system.

I trust this answers your query but should you have any further queries in this regard in this regard please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Primary Care Strategy and Planning