



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhise Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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Deputy Colm Burke

Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
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Dublin 2
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24th December 2020

PQ 44295/20 -To ask the Minister for Health if consideration will be given to implementing coordinated services on a national level for persons who have contracted Covid-19 who are since recovering but require follow-up care or referrals to specialists where necessary; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Burke

As COVID 19 is still a relatively new disease information on it, its features and its course are just emerging. We do however know that the clinical course of viral illnesses varies between people, and that the virus that causes Covid-19 can be detected in some people for many weeks. However this does not mean that people are infectious for a prolonged period of time.

Fatigue is a common symptom after many viral infections and while most people recover in a short few days or weeks it can be prolonged and more severe for others. The reason for this is unclear. It is expected that people make a full recovery over time. Covid-19 is a multisystem infection and may impact people in differing ways. There is no national data at this time on how many Irish people experience prolonged symptoms though there are some reports from individual centres.

Specific guidance on what has been referred to as the “long-tail” is presently under development both here and internationally. People who have had Covid-19 are being followed up by their doctors as appropriate-this is usually their GP, and in the case of those who required hospitalisation and/or ITU admission, this is hospital-based. Longer term observational studies will be required to understand the health consequences presently being attributed to post COVID-19 infection.

Work has been undertaken internationally and in the UK. Guidance will be developed to align needs with care provision and to develop criteria and strategies for the ongoing evaluation of patients.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO