

15th July 2020

Deputy Mary Butler
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ Number: 13720/20

PQ Question:

To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding the reopening of maternity classes including breast feeding and antenatal classes in Cork University Maternity Hospital; his views on the effects postponements and cancellations of such classes is having on pregnant women in preparing for the birth of their child; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mary Butler

Dear Deputy Butler

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:

Following government advice all antenatal classes will remain cancelled until further notice. During this time we are doing our utmost to support our women and keep them informed of all maternity related matters. We have notified them regarding the various interactive maternity and antenatal classes available online during COVID- 19 restrictions. All of this information is available on the CUMH website and we provide regular updates regarding maternity services to the Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate twitter account.

In order to provide reassurance to our women, our midwives from across the four maternity units at Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (which incorporates the maternity units at University Hospital Waterford, University Hospital Kerry and South Tippereary General Hospital) have filmed a series of YouTube informative videos where they address FAQs in relation to maternity services at the hospitals during COVID-19. A Labour Ward tour of the CUMH is also available to access online

We are also due to commence filming on the week commencing Monday the 20th July an additional selection of maternity related videos which will feature information from the multidisciplinary team of midwives and physiotherapists from the hospital, these videos will be very informative and will be available online once filming is complete.

CUMH is following National Clinical Guidelines on this matter. We are constantly reviewing the situation and will review our practice in line with the other HSE Maternity Hospitals once advised by the National Women and Infants Health Programme.

Our staff appreciate how difficult this can be for expectant mothers, and our doctors and midwives are there to support our women at all times.

Yours sincerely



Prof John R. Higgins
Clinical Director Maternity Services
South / South West Hospital Group

Professor John R. Higgins
15 JUL 2020
Clinical Director
Approved