

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
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18th June, 2020.

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Aindrias Moynihan, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 10264/20

"To ask the Minister for Health when the contingency plans and protocols in place since 14 March 2020 to allow SouthDoc services respond to the challenges posed by Covid-19 will be reviewed with consideration for resumption of normal service for counties Cork and Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

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.

The Board of Directors of SouthDoc took a decision on March 11, 2020 to implement a range of contingency plans in order to deal with the serious challenges being posed by the progression of COVID-19. The measures, which became operational on March 14, 2020, were put in place in order to protect the GPs and staff during the out of hours setting. In the intervening period the Board of Directors and Medical Directors have reviewed the contingency service plans regularly.

Overall, the number of patient contacts to SouthDoc has decreased significantly. The majority of consultations are now by way of doctor telephone consultation, a smaller number are in the treatment centre, and even fewer are home visits. The model of medical practice has changed against the backdrop of the pandemic.

The Board of Directors of SouthDoc have recently reviewed the service and a reopening of non-operational treatment centres on a phase basis is planned. The re-opening of the centres requires considerable planning to ensure compliance with Government guidelines on safe restoration of services. The centres in Kanturk and Fermoy have re-opened on June 8th and June 10th respectively and centres in Clonakilty, Macroom and Skibbereen are scheduled to reopen in July.

This situation will be kept under review in the context of the levels of transmission of Covid-19 in the community.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Teresa O' Donovan
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare