



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Straitéis Ghéarmhíochaine agus Pleanáil
FnaSS, Ospidéal Dr. Steevens, Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8
T: 01-6352232 R: acute.strategy@hse.ie

Office of National Director Acute Strategy and Planning
HSE, Dr Steevens Hospital, Dublin 8. D08 W2A8
Tel: 01-6352232 Email: acute.strategy@hse.ie

23rd March 2020

**Deputy Louise O'Reilly,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2**

PQ 3581/20 – To ask the Minister for Health the investment being made in early supported discharge; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

Early Supported discharge (ESD) broadly refers to outreach and in-reach services where healthcare professionals provide continuing patient care at home or in a post-acute environment, supporting safe and earlier patient discharge from acute hospitals to home care. In Ireland, ESD is predominately used to support COPD outreach and the management of post-acute stroke rehabilitation care. The following are some of the initiatives currently underway in this regard -

COPD outreach care - The principle aim of a COPD Outreach Service is to improve services offered to people living with COPD in a quality and safe manner facilitating early discharge from hospital and enabling people to build confidence in effectively managing their chronic condition. The programme also provides admission avoidance for COPD patients presenting in ED. There is currently a COPD Outreach Service in 12 acute hospital sites with plans to expand the service to 4 more acute hospitals. Implementing a COPD Outreach service requires the recruitment of a Respiratory Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) and a Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist (Respiratory) in each site.

Investment in ESD for Stroke Rehabilitation - The National Stroke Programme was established in 2010 and since its inception, investment in stroke care has seen the development of Stroke Units in 21 acute hospitals, the expansion of thrombolysis services to 12 acute hospitals and the roll out of Early Supported Discharge (ESD) services for stroke patients at 6 acute hospitals. The number of stroke specialists increased from 33% to 85% between 2008 and 2015 and mortality from ischaemic Stroke is currently at an all-time low of 7.8%. The HSE continues to support the expansion of Stroke Services in Ireland and business cases have been developed through the Clinical Programme for Stroke Care for the following stroke services:

- Additional staffing and development of acute stroke unit bed capacity
- Expansion of stroke thrombectomy procedures


- Decision supported software for emergency Stroke radiology assessment and case selection for thrombectomy treatment
- Further development of early supported discharge (ESD) for Stroke

The HSE is committed to supporting acute stroke care, including Early Supported Discharge through its allocated funding. At present the HSE has invested in developing 6 new hyper-acute stroke beds at the Mater Hospital.

A new Cardiovascular Audit Manager has been appointed to NOCA who, working closely with the Clinical Lead for Stroke Care, will lead on the first NOCA Stroke Audit and will also play a pivotal role in the development of a 5-Year Strategy for Stroke Care being developed under four pillars: 1. Pre-hospital Care 2. Acute Care 3. Rehabilitation 4. Research and Education.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but please contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,


John Hennessy
National Director
Acute Strategy & Planning