



Géaroibríochtaí

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Míleata Cill Mhaighneann, Baile Átha Cliath 8

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Date: 16/11/2020

Deputy Colm Burke TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 34109/20

To ask the Minister for Health the procedures in place for haemochromatosis patients that cannot access their essential venesection treatments in hospitals in view of the fact that many patients have had their venesection treatments cancelled or postponed indefinitely; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Burke,

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.

Response:

The Liver Working Group of the National Clinical Programme for Gastroenterology and Hepatology developed guidance to support services across the country during the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020. This guidance recommended that all routine in hospital investigations and treatment, such as Fibroscans, liver biopsies, and venesection for Haemochromatosis, should be deferred at that time. An updated guidance was issued in May 2020 and advised patients with haemochromatosis that are symptomatic or have a ferritin over 1000µg/l be venesected with appropriate PPE. These patients may be suitable for treatment in the blood transfusion service or private hospitals and a venesection standard operational policy was developed by the NCPG&H to support these services.

Following approval by National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) in May outpatient and daycase services including those for venesection have resumed and hospitals have developed local plans for how appointments and procedures will be organized to accommodate changes in how spaces are used have to enable social distancing.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Benton', with a horizontal line underneath.

Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations