



Feidhmeannas Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Information Officer
delivering eHealth Ireland,
Dr. Steevens' Hospital
Steevens' Lane
Dublin 8

Ph: 01 635 2732
Fax: 01 635 2740

24th November 2020

Mr. Alan Kelly, T.D.
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re: PQ ref 37870/20

“To ask the Minister for Health the Status of the upgrade of NIMIS Radiology Information system”

Dear Deputy Kelly,

In response to your query, by way of background The National Integrated Medical Imaging (NIMIS) system provides the ability to capture, store and view Radiology and other medical images electronically. It also facilitates the ability to place and track requests for radiology examinations and create and view final examination reports electronically.

It is currently in use in 74 sites across the country including almost all public hospitals and many associated satellite imaging centres. Approximately 45,000 healthcare staff use NIMIS in the course of their work. More than 39 million radiology exams are stored on the system, and approximately 10,500 studies are added every day. The NIMIS platform as a single integrated database for radiology Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) and Radiology Information System (RIS) is one of the largest PACS/RIS of its kind anywhere.

NIMIS Refresh

The HSE commenced a major refresh of the NIMIS solution, “NIMIS2.0” in August 2019. This includes updating hardware in the datacentres and upgrades of the various applications that make up the NIMIS system. Hardware was delivered to the HSE and the technical design and build work began.

COVID Response

The onset of the COVID pandemic in March 2020 required all available resources were redeployed to the immediate HSE COVID response work. This included some of the team members reverting to their work as radiographers in front-line care roles.

The skeleton NIMIS team worked on other aspects of the HSE COVID response. They worked to ensure Radiologists can review and report medical images from home, adapting and replacing some technology to ensure continuity of service and staff safety. The NIMIS team also worked with the supplier and the public hospitals to accelerate delivery of BEAM, a component of the NIMIS2.0. The BEAM application facilitates the electronic exchange of radiology images and examination reports between NIMIS and similar systems in private hospitals, and other public radiology services (e.g. Breast check). Delivery of this capability approximately 14 months ahead of plan provides significant assistance to Diagnostic outsourcing workflows and general patient care delivery across the public and private healthcare system. It is operational in all NIMIS sites.

NIMIS2.0 Restart

NIMIS2.0 was restarted in August as resources were released from immediate HSE COVID response activities. The technical design phase is complete, and the new hardware infrastructure is being built in the HSE data centres. Attention moves to application configuration work in the first half of 2020, then a period of extensive testing of migration and validation. NIMIS2.0 PACS which involves image storage & viewing, voice recognition reporting, and other tools for radiologists is on track for a Go Live in Q4 2021.

The NIMIS Radiology Information System which allows requesting and tracking of radiology exams and reports, amongst other things start with Phase 1 sites in early 2022, and a total of 12 phases completing in late 2023. This approach has been designed to maximise patient care and patient safety. It ensures the minimum disruption to care delivery and enables delivery of some early benefits across healthcare, as BEAM is doing right now for COVID.

If you feel that the question has not been fully answered or you require any further clarity, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Fran Thompson', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Fran Thompson,
Interim Chief Information Officer, OoCIO, HSE.