



12th May 2021

Deputy Verona Murphy,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 21158/21 - To ask the Minister for Health when community medical doctors will be in a position to recommence regular primary medical certificate assessments following legal clarification in relation to the scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Verona Murphy

Dear Deputy Murphy,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 21158/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The Department of Health has advised the HSE that assessments for those applying for Primary Medical Assessments could recommence from 1st January 2021 and this has proceeded in the context of restoring services in a COVID-19 Environment as set out below.

To address the current third wave of COVID-19 infections, there was a requirement to prioritise the level of services delivered during this period. Building upon the experience from earlier waves of the pandemic, Community Services have developed a prioritisation framework to support local decisions to be made on service prioritisation. This approach will ensure that services will be focused on identifying and supporting patients who have the greatest need and enabling staff to be deployed where necessary to support these patients. Where services are curtailed or reduced, this will be in line with clinical approval, a shared national position and with an appropriate risk assessment and communication with providers, service users and families. It is the intention of Community Services that full services would return as soon as is safe and practicable.

Note that in the full year of 2020, a total of 1,273 assessments for Primary Medical Certificates were completed. In January to March 2021, a total of 403 assessments for Primary Medical Certificates were completed.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Maeve Raeside
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations