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Deputy Jennifer Carroll MacNeill
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

10th February 2021

PQ ref: 6066/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health his plans to expand PrEP services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Carroll MacNeill,

Thank you for your question to the Minister for Health, which was forwarded to my office to respond to you directly.

Since November 2019, PrEP is available through the HSE free of charge to those at substantial risk of acquiring HIV through sex. PrEP is available through approved PrEP services and is being rolled out in a phased manner in line with the National Standards for PrEP Service Delivery. <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/prep-information-for-service-providers/national-standards-for-hiv-prep-in-ireland.pdf>

The PrEP service continued to expand in 2020. At the end of 2020, there were eleven public and nine private approved PrEP service providers in Ireland. One additional public STI service has received funding to commence a PrEP service this year. <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/sexual-health/prep/where-to-get-prep/>

The remaining public STI clinics are satellite clinics to the larger STI services and assess patients for PrEP and refer them to the PrEP clinics as required.

A review of the approval process and an audit of existing services against the national PrEP standards will be conducted this year to inform the continued roll-out of the PrEP service.

Although PrEP services faced service restrictions in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of people accessing the national PrEP programme increased. As the Covid-19 situation improves, service capacity will improve also, and it is anticipated that the numbers accessing the national PrEP programme will continue to increase.

Yours Sincerely

Maeve O'Brien

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Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme