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Deputy Cathal Crowe
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

15th February 2021

PQ ref: 6436/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health when sexual health screening appointments will be resuming in view of the fact that only emergency appointments are being carried out at present.

Dear Deputy Crowe,

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

The recent wave of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the acute hospital system, resulting in many public STI services having to again restrict services to emergency appointments only. Over the last year, public STI services re-configured services, such as establishing online booking systems, and providing virtual appointments, in order to support STI service provision in line with the social distancing requirements due to COVID-19. These systems allowed services to remain operational during the second wave of COVID-19 and will support the resumption of STI services as soon as service and staff capacity permits. The timeframe for each STI service will be based on the COVID-19 situation in each of the hospitals.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the HSE Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) have been in regular communication with public STI services and are working together with HIV Ireland to maintain an updated list of service restrictions for service users. <https://www.hivireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Health-Service-Restrictions.pdf>

Yours Sincerely

Maeve O'Brien

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Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme