



**Niamh Smyth TD**  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**PQ 6600/21**

**“To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the substantial delays in the issuing of primary medical certificates during the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions; the steps he is taking to rectify the matter; if online consultations been examined for applicants; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Niamh Smyth”**

Dear Deputy Smyth,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 6600/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

There are challenges in some CHO areas in progressing assessments for primary medical certificates due to redeployment of Medical Officers particularly in regard to the COVID Vaccine Programme and management of outbreaks in Residential Care Facilities across the country. The HSE is currently revising its service recovery and restoration plans taking account of the COVID pressure challenges presenting. Assessments for primary medical certificates are considered in that context.

The HSE has no plans at present to introduce online consultations. There has been instances in the past whereby consultations were conducted remotely by telephone and documentation supporting the application were submitted by post. However there is limited scope for telephone consultations at present due to redeployment of Medical Officers as outlined above.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

**TJ Dunford**  
Head of Operations; Primary Care.  
Community Operations.