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Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

26th February 2021

PQ ref: 8546/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if he plans to resume the pilot home test STI screening service recently launched by the HSE; the steps his Department is taking to fund and resource this service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Deputy Shortall,

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

The HSE Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme is piloting a home STI testing service in Dublin, Cork and Kerry, to assess the feasibility, acceptability and cost-effectiveness of an online STI service integrated with public STI clinics in Ireland.

The pilot was temporarily paused in January due to the impact of COVID-19 on the acute hospital system, to ensure sufficient capacity in participating STI clinics for service users who may need follow-up treatment or support. As the hospital system is now stabilising, it is anticipated that the service will be resumed March.

The pilot project is funded through the Government of Ireland's Sláintecare Integration Fund 2019 under Grant Agreement Number ID57 and co-funded by the HSE Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme.

The service delivery period of the pilot is due to be completed by the end of May 2021. Following the service delivery period, a formal evaluation of the pilot project will be undertaken.

The pilot project and the evaluation results will provide valuable information to inform decision-making in relation to future service provision.

Yours Sincerely

Maeve O'Brien

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Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme