



Sean Sherlock, T.D.
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

2nd March, 2021

PQ: 8923/21

To ask the Minister for Health the reason the HSE long-term illness scheme does not include the FreeStyle Libre glucose monitoring system for persons with diabetes over 21 years of age but does include two other glucose sensor monitors which cost more than €1,200 per person per year. -Sean Sherlock

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 8923/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The FreeStyle Libre device which is currently marketed in Ireland is a Flash Glucose Monitoring (FGM) device, It is not a Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) device. Whilst FGM shares a number of common features with CGM there are differences between them. For example; CGM devices connect to pumps and have built in alarms to alert for hypos, FGM devices do not have these features. There is also strong clinical evidence for the use of CGMs in respect of improved patient outcomes.

CGM devices are managed through the HSE National Insulin Pump tender process and are provided locally via Aids and Appliances. There is a separate approval process for CGM devices at local level that includes the associated equipment such as a transmitter. The ancillaries/ consumable products (sensors) associated with CGMs are available through the GMS Reimbursement List and are applied for by the company through the non-drug reimbursement application process to PCERS. In order to have a CGM added to the HSE National Tender, an application for the ancillary products is required to be made concurrently to PCERS.

The FGM device of which there is only one marketed in Ireland at present, is provided free of charge by the company in the same manner to the HSE as Blood Glucose Meters. FGM is a replacement for the use of Blood Glucose Meters but does not have insulin pump connectivity or a transmitter. Sensors are the ancillary required to use the FGM device and are supported on a patient specific administrative basis in line with the Health Technology Assessment Group recommendation accepted by the HSE in 2018.

It was anticipated that efficiencies in the use of blood glucose testing strips would be off-set against the cost of FreeStyle Libre sensors. However, internal analysis does not indicate that the projected savings envisaged in reduction of strip usage is materialising. Furthermore, no dedicated funding has been provided to PCERS in the National Service Plan 2021 for technologies such as FreeStyle Libre.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Doyle', written over a horizontal line.

Suzanne Doyle
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service