

10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Deputy Darren O'Rourke, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2  
[darren.orourke@oireachtas.ie](mailto:darren.orourke@oireachtas.ie)

**PQ Number: 4805/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the commitments he and the HSE have made to include patient, service user and public opinions in the design, planning and delivery of health services; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Darren O'Rourke**

Dear Deputy O' Rourke,

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

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

In the 2020 Service Plan it was deemed that partnering with patients at all levels of the health service ensures that we as an organisation are informed and driven by the needs of the patients and the communities we serve. Thus the active and meaningful participation of patients in healthcare planning, design and evaluation is essential to the HSE. We are committed to listening to our patients and ensuring their perspectives inform the design, development and delivery of healthcare services. This involves utilising the skills and expertise of staff, patients and families to co-design a service that meets the needs of our population. We engage with patients, their families and carers, responding to their feedback, learning from their experience and improving care.

The priorities and actions in the 2020 Service Plan was to facilitate patient engagement with their own health and wellbeing and with the healthcare delivery system and this was to be done by embedding 'Your Voice Matters' survey framework as an option within the suite of patient experience tools available and to develop and strengthen systems which ensure that meaningful patient engagement and the voice of the patient is at the centre of the design, development and delivery of our health service. It was also a goal to gather qualitative information about patient experience and use it to drive systemic change and to develop a

cohesive framework for patient engagement, experience and advocacy at both corporate and service delivery level.

Regrettably the pandemic happened very early in the year and as you may be aware our resources were redeployed to assist in the work being done to curb the pandemic. However, we did continue engagement with the National Patient Forum, Patients for Patient Safety Ireland and the Patient Representative Panel on issues concerning the contact management programme and its impact and implications for the public.

We are making provision in the 2021 Service Plan to engage people who use our health service, from the start, in the planning design and delivery of services, supporting, listening, mentoring them and valuing their input and this is a key priority of the Chief Clinical Officer. It is also the aim to enhance our work by putting the patient and service user at the centre of all of our work and to build real partnerships with patients and service users through the appointment of 20 Patient / Service User Partnership Leads and to continue to listen to patients and, through Your Service Your Say, ensure that services are responsive to their needs.

You should also note that the Quality Improvement Team support the HSE Board's Quality and Safety Committee and HSE senior leaders to engage with patient stories of the real lived experiences of people who use our health services, to understand the context and impact of their decisions in overseeing and improving care.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely



---

**Greg Price**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**Partnering with Patients, Service Users and Family Members**  
**National Quality Improvement Team**