



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer
Dr Steevens' Hospital|Steevens' Lane|Dublin 8|D08 W2A8
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Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Cliniciúil
Ospidéal Dr Steevens|Lána Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

Deputy Denis Naughten

Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Date: 24/02/2021

PQ ref 4859/21 - To ask the Minister for Health To ask the Minister for Health if he will approve the use of pulse oximetry to detect early deterioration of patients with Covid-19 in primary and community care settings similar to the NHS in the UK; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Naughten

Thank you for your representation. Measuring and monitoring people at home using pulse oximetry has been taking place in Ireland in some hospitals prior to the pandemic and was rapidly adopted initially in response to Covid to facilitate early discharge. This is now in use in about half the acute hospital sites using an oximeter, a phone app developed by an Irish technology company (patientMpower) and online monitoring and support by hospital staff.

In the last 2 months this technology was provided to GPs in response to the surge in cases and has already been used by more than a hundred GPs to support their patients, and was discussed at educational events with more than 1500 GPs. The HSE has provided access to the Oximeters and the supporting technology. This is however an emerging use for this technology and there is still an element of learning and experience required before its safe and effective use is fully understood, and there is an appropriate caution about adoption at this time.

Pulse oximetry is a core part of the acute COVID assessment provided in our Covid assessment hubs, and is used by GPs and Paramedics to assess people in the community. Its use in the evaluation of COVID complications is also being developed.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO



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