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Deputy Mary Lou McDonald  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

19th March 2021

**PQ ref: 12682/21**

**Question:** To ask the Minister for Health the HIV and STI public testing services that are currently in operation under level 5 Covid-19 restrictions in County Dublin; his plans to restore services which have been suspended due to Covid-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Deputy McDonald,

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

The public STI/HIV testing services in County Dublin currently operating at a limited capacity include:

- GUIDE Clinic, St. James's Hospital
- Mater Misericordiae University Hospital
- St Vincent's University Hospital

STI services are predominantly restricted to GP referrals or emergency appointments at present, and existing PrEP users are being maintained on treatment.

The Gay Men's Health Service (GMHS) is open for existing PrEP users and a phased reintroduction of STI services is currently underway.

Beaumont Hospital has resumed its walk-in HIV testing service.

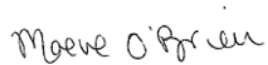
Community rapid HIV testing is currently available through the HIV Ireland MPOWER programme from the HIV Ireland premises.

Over the last year, public STI services re-configured services, such as establishing online booking systems, and providing virtual appointments, in order to support STI service provision in line with the social distancing requirements due to COVID-19. These systems allowed services to remain operational during the second wave of COVID-19 and will support the resumption of STI services in the coming weeks, as capacity permits as part

of the overall phased prioritised reintroduction of services. The timeframe for each STI service will be based on the COVID-19 situation in each of the hospitals.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the HSE Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) have been in regular communication with public STI services and are working together with HIV Ireland to maintain an updated list of service restrictions for service users. <https://www.hivireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Health-Service-Restrictions.pdf>

Yours Sincerely



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**Maeve O'Brien**

Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme