



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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Telephone 353 56 7784100
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Deputy Neasa Hourigan TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

19th April 2021

PQ15432/21* *“To ask the Minister for Health the work that has been undertaken with parents and young persons seeking to access healthcare outside the State under the provisions of the Cross-Border Directive and treatment abroad scheme to ensure the available options for access to care are communicated effectively in line with objective 13 of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”*

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

Thank you for your PQ above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

Access to healthcare with funding via the HSE is organised under EU Directive known as the Cross Border Directive (CBD) and EU Regulation known as the Treatment Abroad Scheme (TAS).

In general the TAS allows patients to access healthcare which is not available in Ireland in another EU or EEA country or Switzerland, the treatment is subject to prior authorisation and specific criteria in order to be eligible for HSE funding. The TAS is specific to public patients in Ireland seeking access to public healthcare in the other EU/EEA country/Switzerland. Access to funding under the TAS is organised through an application process for prior authorisation. The patient and his/her treating consultant completes the application form which is processed and a decision issued in writing. The HSE has developed a comprehensive webpage of information on the TAS. Also from time to time the TAS office writes to consultants via the Hospital Group CEOs to inform consultants about the Scheme and their responsibilities in making applications. All decisions with regard to the clinical management of patients is a matter for the treating clinicians.

In general the CBD allows for patients to access healthcare which is available in Ireland in another EU or EEA country. However, the HSE does allow patients to access healthcare under the CBD where they would be entitled to access under the TAS but would prefer to access under the CBD. Such situations usually arise where the patient would prefer to access the healthcare in the EU or EEA in the private healthcare sector as this is not provided for under the TAS. The CBD legislation prohibits the promotion of the CBD to patients. However, the HSE has a comprehensive website on the CBD and when appropriate I when invited am happy to provide presentations to groups of patients.

For the last number of years I as the manager of the Schemes have attended and presented at the TENI annual conferences in Carlow (November each year) on both the TAS and CBD which includes an open Q&A session after the presentation. I also facilitate person to person questions and answers on this occasion as it is my experience that some people (patients and family) may not be comfortable asking personal questions in a public forum.

If you have any queries, or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0872668759 or via catherinet.donohoe@hse.ie.

Yours sincerely,



PC Catherine Donohoe

A/Assistant National Director.