



Primary Care Reimbursement Service  
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Noel Grealish, T.D.  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

14<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

PQ: 16612/21

**To ask the Minister for Health the reason diabetes care such as continuous glucose monitoring sensors are covered under the long-term illness scheme given flash glucose meters are more compatible for at-risk patients during the Covid-19 pandemic; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Noel Grealish.**

Dear Deputy Grealish,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 16612/21), 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 lot of common features with CGM there are definite differences between both. For example; CGM devices connect to pumps and have built in alarms to alert for hypo's, FGM devices do not have these features. There is also strong clinical evidence for the use of CGMs.

CGM devices go 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 PCRS. In order to have a CGM added to the HSE National Tender, an application for the ancillary products also needs to be made concurrently to PCRS - it is a two-step process.

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 as Blood Glucose Meters. FGM is a replacement for the use Blood Glucose Meters and does not have insulin pump connectivity or a transmitter. The only ancillary associated with FGM is the sensors. Therefore, the process for reimbursement is not through the HSE National Insulin Pump tender. Applications for addition to the GMS Reimbursement List are in line with the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013. Due to the budget impact associated with this product and that no

additional funding has been provided for new technologies, PCRS introduced a reimbursement application system for FGM sensors. 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.

Yours sincerely,



Suzanne Doyle  
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service

**The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to the status of Medical Cards and GP Visit Cards applications, which the Deputy / Senator may wish to use for an earlier response. Tel: 01-8647180 / email: [Oireachtas.pcrs@hse.ie](mailto:Oireachtas.pcrs@hse.ie)**