



Dearadh agus Nuálaíocht Chliniciúil; Oifig an Príohifigeach Cliniciúil  
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Deputy Louise O'Reilly, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**RE: PQ 25180/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health the funding required to ensure that all heart failure units have access to BNP testing; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

Dear Deputy O'Reilly

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Heart Programme on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

Natriuretic peptide testing (NT pro BNP or BNP) is a standard test required in the diagnosis and management of heart failure.

A survey carried out by the former National Clinical Programme for Heart Failure (subsumed into National Heart Programme) in 2016 found that 23 acute hospitals had BNP/ NT-proBNP testing available. A more recent survey carried out by the Heart Failure Sub-group of the National Heart Programme Clinical Advisory Group found that 26 of 27 respondents had access to BNP testing for Heart Failure patients.

There has been significant progress in the availability of this test with an agreement to increase direct access to chronic disease diagnostic services for GPs, including equitable access to NTproBNP testing. Building on the work already underway in the community to augment GP direct access to radiology, this service will be supported by 23 public hospital laboratories across Ireland.

GPs will soon be provided with direct access to NTproBNP blood testing nationally via public hospitals for the full adult population, regardless of their GMS status. Direct GP access to this blood test will enhance the diagnosis and management of individuals with heart failure, atrial fibrillation, type 2 diabetes, and ischemic heart disease in primary care.

The National Heart Programme plans to develop a proposal aimed at addressing and managing the remaining gaps in the provision of BNP testing for heart failure services.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**

