



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97 Ireland

Our Ref: PQ/55768/21

3rd December 2021

Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Eireann
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Cullinane

I refer to your recent PQ which has been forwarded to me for attention.

PQ

To ask the Minister for Health the number of places for oral immunotherapy for children; the locations of each facility in which the treatment is dispensed; his plans to expand the number of places for children; the location in which treatment is dispensed; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response

In reference to your PQ, largescale Oral Immunotherapy (OIT) cannot be delivered within the current service provision of CHI which is already beyond capacity. It would require considerable extra funding for the allergy services for additional clinical and non-clinical staff and clinical space. At present, each allergic child is seen on average only 4-6 times from diagnosis in infancy to the age of 16. Each patient considered suitable for OIT would require a food challenge (5-6 hours with 1:2 nursing supervision) and subsequently, at least 12, twice weekly "updosing" hospital visits (2 hours in the day ward with 1:4 nursing supervision) in the first six months. This would be followed by quarterly and finally semi-annual outpatient visits permanently thereafter. A 24 hour on-call Consultant advice service would also be required.

The licensing of Palforzia, the first oral peanut desensitisation product, significantly alters the allergy management landscape as it is a standardised product, supported by evidence-based desensitisation protocols, with a high safety standard. Once this therapeutic option becomes available, it is the strong recommendation of Ireland's allergy specialists that peanut desensitisation should be made available at scale, within our public health service, to all suitable candidates.



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanai Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97 Ireland

It is estimated that there are approximately 10,000 Irish children with peanut allergy between the ages of 5 and 16 years. Not every peanut allergic child is a suitable candidate for OIT and up to 20% are unable to tolerate it. Some parents and children may not take up the offer, due to the burdensome nature of this treatment. However, it is anticipated that hundreds of children will be eligible. CHI envisage discussing this with the HSE as part of the annual Estimates process in 2022.

Please see additional background information enclosed provided by CHI and CUH medical staff.

Yours sincerely

Joe Gannon

Chief Operations Officer

Email: joe.gannon@nchg.ie