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19<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Deputy O'Cuiv,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ48980/21: To ask the Minister for Health if an analysis has been carried out on the possible negative effects of the greater use of telemedicine during the Covid-19 pandemic for interaction with medical practitioners; if analysis has been carried out on the use of telemedicine for the prescription of abortion pills which was temporarily provided for as an emergency measure; if so, the results of such studies; if not, if it is planned to carry out such an analysis; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy O'Cuiv,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

On April 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 the Model of Care for Termination of Pregnancy was revised temporarily for the duration of the COVID-19 public Health Emergency to facilitate remote consultation in early pregnancy. There has been good feedback from providers and patients and there is good evidence from published literature from the UK that remote provision of abortion care is very safe. No analysis as such on remote consultation has been conducted in Ireland.

In light of the continued easing of Covid-19 restrictions over the coming weeks, the Department have requested the HSE to revisit the Model of Care to review its operation and consider whether it should be retained going forward.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary-Jo Biggs'.

**Mary-Jo Biggs, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme**