



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Emer Higgins
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

13/10/2021

PQ 50104/21- Deputy Emer Higgins- To ask the Minister for Health the progress of recruiting four unfilled epilepsy nurse specialist posts as agreed in 2018 for the implementation of the pregnancy prevention programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Higgins,

Thank you for your representation. Foetal valproate syndrome (FVS) is a recognised clinical condition and diagnostic criteria has been developed to assist in identifying it. Where children or adults have been exposed to valproate in utero, there is concern that they may have FVS, either because of the presence of congenital malformations, or a developmental disorder. To date there has been funding for two advanced nurse practitioners who have been appointed as part of the pregnancy prevent programme.

In addition the HSE set up a dedicated FVS diagnostic clinic, prioritising patients who need an assessment for FVS. The capacity building exercise included the funding and the appointment of a 5.8wte posts which included a Consultant Paediatrician, Consultant Geneticist, Administration Support, Laboratory Geneticist, the two advanced nurse practitioner posts and a data manager.

The HSE has sought funding for the remaining 4 advanced nurse practitioners as part of the 2022 estimate process

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO