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Deputy Kieran O'Donnell TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 51227/21

To ask the Minister for Health if a diabetes psychology resource will be provided to each community diabetes specialist team hub under the Integrated Model of Care for the Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease Implementation Guide; his views on whether access to psychosocial support in these teams should be made available; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Donnell

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 Clinical Programme for Diabetes on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes acknowledges that there is a lack of psychology services for people living with diabetes in Ireland. In a National Survey of Diabetes Care Delivery in Acute Hospitals 2018 Report, (available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/diabetes/resources/national-survey-of-diabetes-care-delivery-in-acute-hospitals-2018>), the greatest deficit in hospital staffing dedicated to diabetes care was in psychology services. There are even fewer psychology services available in the community.

Self-management education programmes such as DAFNE (Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating) programme (for people living with type 1 diabetes), DESMOND (Diabetes Education and Self-Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed People) and Discover Diabetes (for people living with type 2 diabetes) provide some psychosocial support for people living with diabetes. However these programmes are only available to a subset of people and the psychological needs of the majority of people living with diabetes in Ireland are not being addressed.

National Clinical Programme for Diabetes has met with members of the *Psychologists in Diabetes Group*, which is affiliated with the *Psychological Society of Ireland*, to discuss shared interests in

improving psychological services for people living with diabetes in Ireland. National Clinical Programme for Diabetes has suggested that the *Psychologists in Diabetes Group* produce a “white paper”, outlining how and where psychological support can be incorporated into existing care pathways for people with diabetes attending hospital and community services.

Currently, there are no plans to appoint psychologists with expertise in Diabetes to the Specialist Teams in the Ambulatory Care Hubs being established as part of the HSE Enhanced Community Care Programme (ECCP). We would anticipate that, following further discussion with *the Psychologists in Diabetes Group*, a clearer pathway for incorporating psychology support into routine diabetes care can be established.

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



Anne Horgan
General Manager