

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

**Deputy Jennifer Carroll MacNeill**  
**Dáil Éireann**  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

19/10/2021

**PQ 51485/21- Deputy Jennifer Carroll MacNeill- To ask the Minister for Health when the recruitment of epilepsy nurse specialist posts as laid out in the pregnancy prevention programme is to be completed; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

Dear Deputy Carroll MacNeill,

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. Once funding has been received the recruitment of these posts will be expedited.

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely,



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Sharon Hayden  
General Manager  
Office of the CCO