

David Cullinane TD  
Leinster House,  
Dublin 2

15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**PQ 43152/21- To ask the Minister for Health the estimated additional cost of providing BNP blood testing and echocardiography at primary care level; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - David Cullinane**

Deputy Cullinane,

Under the Winter 2020/21 plan, further integrated delivery of care in the community was prioritised. In order to provide timely direct access to diagnostics for GPs, provision was made to enhance existing services. Since the 18th January 2021, increased direct GP access to radiology diagnostic services was rolled out. This service accommodates additional access to 94,000 scans for x-ray, CT, MRI and DEXA via private providers/hospitals across the country. Additional diagnostic services, including direct access to BNP testing, spirometry, and echocardiography, will also be made available to GPs under this initiative in the coming months. These services will support GPs in the delivery of improved patient care within the Chronic Disease Management Programme which has been established under the 2019 GP Agreement.

The Chronic Disease Management Programme will deliver proactive GP care to an estimated 431,000 patients when fully rolled out, allowing them two annual consultations with the GP practice nurse and two consultations with their GP to facilitate management of four conditions (Type 2 Diabetes, asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), and cardiovascular disease). It is anticipated that the Chronic Disease Management Programme will both improve patient care and reduce pressure on hospital services by reducing the need for patient attendance.

Yours sincerely,



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**Geraldine Crowley,  
Assistant National Director,  
Primary Care Strategy and Planning**



Seirbhís Sláinte  
Níos Fearr  
á Forbairt

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