



5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 44439/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the community health organisations within the State which offer electricity subsidies to patients who suffer from COPD or similar illnesses which result in excessive use of oxygen machines and so on in particular in cases in which those persons are in low income households; the reason a disparity appears to remain across different CHOs which clearly demonstrates that there is a postcode advantage in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**- Fergus O'Dowd**

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 44439/21), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

In response to your query, only one CHO offers an electricity allowance to patients who suffer from COPD or similar illnesses. CHO 9 (Dublin North, Dublin North Central) offers an electricity allowance, which varies across the different LHO areas that comprise it, to medical card holders.

The continued payment of this allowance in parts of CHO 9 is based on historic practices within those particular local areas. It is hoped that these remaining local areas will adjust their practices to become compliant with those in every other CHO across the country where such an allowance was discontinued many years ago.

In respect of individuals who may be experiencing difficulty in paying their electricity bills financial assistance is available to them via their Community Welfare Officer in the Department of Social Protection. It would be advisable for them to contact their local Community Welfare Officer who can best advice on the exact process for accessing this assistance.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

**Seán McArt**  
General Manager Primary Care  
National Community Operations