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4th October 2021

Deputy Whitmore,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ45727/21: To ask the Minister for Health the status of the implementation plan of the new National Maternity Strategy; when the implementation plan will be published and made available; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Whitmore,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The National Maternity Strategy (NMS) was launched by the Minister for Health in January 2016. The NMS has 77 recommendations to be delivered on over the 10-year life span on the strategy. The National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) developed an implementation plan in 2017 with 236 actions, and a detailed cost estimate to deliver on the 77 recommendations in the NMS. Work has been ongoing on the delivery of the implementation plan since 2017.

In February 2020 HIQA published a review of their 2016 maternity standards. Recommendation 1 was the HSE produce a revised implementation plan for the National Maternity Strategy, that is fully costed and time bound.

Progress to Date

In developing the revised implementation plan, NWIHP have carried out a detailed review of progress across all 236 actions, and the 77 recommendations. Table 1 indicates the progress across all 236 actions.

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|---|-------------|
| Complete | 61% (n=145) |
| In progress | 25% (n=59) |
| Delayed (Target end date extended) | 9% (n=21) |
| Late/not started (Work yet to commence) | 5% (n=11) |

The status of each of the 236 actions relates to the projected timelines developed in 2017. The actions that are late/not started relate to: a review of the Mother and Infant Scheme, and implementing a standardised Early Pregnancy Assessment Units (EPAUs) around the country.

The revised implementation plan has new end dates for the actions that are in progress or delayed, and has new start dates for those late/not started actions.

The revised Implementation Plan is currently going through the HSE approval process and will be published on the National Women and Infants Health Programme website in Q4 2021.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Mary-Jo Biggs, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme