



Dearadh agus Nuálaíocht Chliniciúil; Oifig an Príohoifigeach Cliniciúil  
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11<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

Deputy Marian Harkin, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**RE: PQ 46633/21**

**To ask the Minister for Health when the specialist community diabetes teams under the enhanced community care programme be appointed; if it will be available to all persons with diabetes free of charge; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Harkin,

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.

In line with the vision set out by Sláintecare, the HSE Enhanced Community Care (ECC) programme is a new, targeted reform programme that aims to resource and scale-up community healthcare services, including specialist diabetes services, in line with the *National Framework for the Integrated Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease in Ireland, 2020-2025*.

As part of this initiative, extensive funding has been secured to develop 30 specialist ambulatory care hubs, that will each serve approximately three community healthcare networks [CHNs] (a population of approximately 150,000). These hubs will be resourced with over 1,000 new posts across three chronic disease areas – diabetes, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease.

These hubs will deliver specialist services to all eligible patients, thereby supporting General Practices to provide a spectrum of care enabling people with chronic disease to be cared for in the community. Specialist diabetes, respiratory and cardiovascular services, delivered in the ambulatory care hub, will be free of charge to all eligible persons, regardless of GMS status.

To enhance diabetes care in the community, each specialist ambulatory care hub will be resourced with the following diabetes specialist staff:

- Three Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) - Diabetes Integrated Care;
- Three Senior Dietitians (Diabetes);

- Three Staff Grade Dietitians (Diabetes Prevention);
- Three Podiatrists (1 Clinical Specialist, 1 Senior Podiatrist and 1 Staff Grade Podiatrists).

Recruitment for Phase 1 of this ECC programme began in Q1 2021 and, to date, over 60 new chronic disease specialist staff have already commenced in posts, with many others appointed and in the pre-employment stage of recruitment. Recruitment for Phase 2 ECC programme starts in Q4 2021.

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



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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**