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15<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Deputy Wynne,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ46956/21: To ask the Minister for Health if additional midwives and nurses have been instated due to the increased level of care that they are expected to provide in maternity settings due the restricted access of birth partners.**

Dear Deputy Wynne,

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.

Birth partners are an integral part of a woman's pregnancy and birth journey and it was regrettable that access to birth partners was restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maternity settings are staffed with sufficient number of registered midwives to provide one to one midwifery care in labour. Appropriate skill mix of the midwifery team ensured that specialised and complex care was delivered as required.

Antenatal and postnatal care is supported by the wider multidisciplinary team based on the needs of women including medical personnel, allied health professionals e.g. physiotherapists, medical social workers, dietitians, healthcare attendants and an array of specialist midwifery personnel including lactation, perinatal mental health, diabetes, infectious disease etc.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

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