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22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2022

Deputy Patricia Ryan  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House

Dear Deputy Ryan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to this Department for response.

**PQ 18537\_22**

**To ask the Minister for Health if he will report on the work being done to address younger onset dementia; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

The importance of timely diagnosis and appropriate post-diagnostic supports for people with dementia is highlighted in the National Dementia Strategy through a number of actions. In order to progress the implementation of these actions, the National Dementia Office established two projects in 2017; The Post-Diagnostic Support Project and the Dementia Diagnostic Project, each supported by a multidisciplinary steering group. The outputs from these projects have informed the Dementia Model of Care which is in development. The Dementia Model of Care includes pathways of care for all people living with dementia including those aged under 65 years. These pathways are across assessment, diagnosis, communicating a diagnosis and post-diagnostic support.

The National Dementia Strategy also highlights that people with young onset dementia usually experience “greater difficulty accessing a diagnosis and fitting into existing dementia service provision, which is generally tailored to the needs of older people” (2014, p.11). To address this and fill an identify information gap, the National Dementia Office (NDO) in 2018 was successful in securing funding from the Department of Health Dormant Account Fund to carry out a review of the diagnostic and post-diagnostic pathways and processes for younger onset dementia in Ireland. This review was completed and published in 2020 (available [here](#)). Information and evidence included in this review has informed the contents of the Draft Dementia Model of Care.

In addition, dementia –specific services are available to people aged under 65 in the community. These include the National Dementia Adviser (DA) service funded by the HSE and operated by the Alzheimer Society of Ireland. The DA service is an information and advice services, sign-posting people to relevant community-based supports and providing emotional support. The expansion of this service was based on an independent evaluation which was completed in 2018. A network of Memory Technology Resource Rooms is also available for all people with dementia providing OT assessment, advice and support in relation to assistive technologies and other post-diagnostic supports.

Specialist teams of Memory Assessment and Support Services are being developed to be integrated with neurology services and provide a pathway of care for people aged under 65. These are new services funded under the National Service Plan 2021 (N=4) and 2022 (N=5).

Regards,

**Ms. Janette Dwyer**  
Assistant National Director,  
Services for Older People, Change & Innovation