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Re. PQ 20432/22: To ask the Minister for Health the amount of funding allocated to the national skin cancer prevention plan to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

Since the launch of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan in July 2019, circa €538,000 has been spent on its implementation. This includes investment from the HSE National Cancer Control Programme, Healthy Ireland and Sláintecare.

Additional funding has been provided by Healthy Ireland and Sláintecare to implement the plan.

The implementation of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan is a cross-sectoral collaboration led by the National Skin Cancer Prevention Implementation group. Examples of initiatives underway as part of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan include the following:

- Cancer Prevention Co-ordinator commenced role in Dec 2020 to coordinate the implementation of the Plan.
- A national “Healthy Ireland SunSmart” brand was established and launched. The SunSmart brand is the forefront of a National SunSmart Awareness Campaign which includes radio, press, social media activity, and patient advocate videos. The campaign is run on an annual basis between April to September. During the campaign (April-September) a multidisciplinary team meets weekly to coordinate the SunSmart media campaign. The annual SunSmart media campaign aims to increase awareness of the SunSmart behaviours in the general public and among high-priority groups. Work currently underway includes local and national radio campaigns (interviews with experts and advertising), press (interviews with experts and press releases to raise awareness of campaign), social media, television Etc.
- Primary school lesson plans developed, piloted and continue roll out. Including resources uploaded on Scoilnet and sent to primary schools.
- SunSmart sunhats to be included in the national baby box pilot.
- Consultation with young people aged 12-18 years to inform the development of age-appropriate initiatives to engage them in skin cancer prevention behaviours.
- SunSmart games manual for summer camps, including providing long sleeve tops to children attending the national Lets Go summer camps and wide brimmed hats for coaches at camps

- Wide brimmed hats and sunscreen dispensers piloted among outdoor worker organisations and outdoor leisure groups.
- Educational events held with RCSI pharmacy students, ESB, Monaghan County Council, World Cancer Day webinar with healthcare professionals, Tennis Ireland, Pavee Point, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, Construction Industry Federation and Teagasc for farm advisers.
- Outdoor workers resources have been developed to deliver a focused approach to support SunSmart awareness and behaviours among outdoor workers including a risk assessment tool, audit tool, framework, sample survey and sample terms of reference. Strong links have been forged with the Health and Safety Authority and organisations such as An Post, Teagasc, ESB and county councils.
- A number of research projects and publications, including a collaboration with the Health Behaviour in School Children survey, consultations with young people on skin cancer prevention behaviours, and an estimation of melanoma-related costs by disease stage and phase of management in Ireland.

A wide range of resources developed as part of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan are housed at www.hse.ie/sunsmart. Reports of the annual implementation review are also available at this link.

The implementation of the plan to date is a successful example of cross-sectoral collaboration but an impact on skin cancer incidence will require sustained long-term efforts. Planning is already underway to identify priority areas to address in the next National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan, for 2023 onwards.

Yours sincerely



Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide
National Director
National Cancer Control Programme

