



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Office of the Head of Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare
HSE Offices, Lacken
Dublin Road
Kilkenny

Telephone +353 56 7784100

13th December 2022

Ms. Róisín Shortall TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 61263/22

To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 198 of 22 June 2022, the steps being taken to progress nurse prescribing of opioid substitution therapy; the reason this has still not been developed given the urgent need for additional personnel to prescribe; if his attention has been brought to the temporary closure of a detox unit, St. Francis Farm, Tullow, Carlow during the summer due to a shortage of personnel to prescribe; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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

I have reviewed the matter and the following outlines the current position.

The pathway for the progression for Nurse Prescribing of opioid substitution therapy lies with the Department of Health not at CHO level.

The temporary closure of the detoxification unit within St. Francis Farm, Tullow, Co. Carlow during the summer of 2022 was not only due to the shortage of personnel to prescribe but also due to the difficulty in recruiting GP's to provide medical cover for the service users within the detoxification unit.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Marie Lanigan
Head of Service-Primary Care/Assistant National Director
South East Community Healthcare