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Deputy Shortall,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

28th December 2022

PQ 63087/22: To ask the Minister for Health if he will outline the current policy on home births; the number of midwives providing this service by county; the steps that are being taken to expand this service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Róisín Shortall

Response:

Dear Deputy Shortall,

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.

The HSE Homebirth Service is delivered by 22 Self Employed Community Midwives in accordance with a range of clinical guidelines and within scope of practice and compliance requirements as provided by the HSE. In February 2022, the governance of the HSE Home Birth Service moved from Community Operations to Acute Operations. In line with the objectives of the National Maternity Strategy the service is now being integrated into the maternity networks, part of the six Hospital Groups.

The HSE is committed to the Maternity Strategy and improvements in maternity care. The supported care pathway has provided for midwifery care and community midwifery clinics across the country. In the last two years alone there have been 13 home from home rooms established. There has been a move to early transfer home and the development of post-natal hubs in the community also.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

John Smith,
Assistant National Director, Acute Operations.

