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18th February 2022

Deputy Gannon,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 4839/22: To ask the Minister for Health the actions that are being taken to support women and pregnant persons with hyperemesis who face significant financial costs to access HSE recommended treatment of pyridoxine and doxylamine; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Gannon,

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.

Women diagnosed with hyperemesis should contact their primary care physician in the first instance. If considered necessary a referral to a maternity hospital is appropriate. Following assessment the woman may be admitted for intravenous fluid administration and on occasion intravenous vitamin administration. Occasionally drug therapy to control vomiting might be indicated. Any drug therapy prescribed in early pregnancy must be weighed against potential harm and potential benefits.

In relation to specific medications that may be prescribed to women experiencing severe hyperemesis and the current financial costs associated with same as borne directly by the patient, the HSE's Primary Care Reimbursement Scheme has asked the HSE's Medicines Management Programme to examine the appropriateness and feasibility of a patient specific arrangement for the product.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

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