



Géaroibríochtaí
Aonad 4A, Áras Dargan, An Ceantar Theas, An Bóthar
Míleata Cill Mhaighneann, Baile Átha Cliath 8

Acute Operations
Unit 4A, The Dargan Building, Heuston South Quarter,
Military Road, Kilmainham, Dublin 8

☎: 0179 59971 📧: acute.operations@hse.ie

Date: 28/01/2022

Deputy Ged Nash TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ No. 1226/22

To ask the Minister for Health the reason haematopoietic stem cell transplantation treatment is not available to patients in Ireland with multiple sclerosis; if there are plans to change this approach; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy Nash,

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.

Response:

Approximately 9000 people in Ireland live with multiple sclerosis (MS), the majority of whom respond well to currently available disease modifying medications, all of which are available in Ireland. A small minority of people with MS do not respond well and for these people Autologous Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (AHSCT) is a useful option. Studies have shown a prolonged benefit from AHSCT in people with MS who have highly active disease that is not adequately controlled by one of the currently available highly efficacious therapies.

AHSCT is available in the UK for Irish people with MS who fulfil strict treatment criteria. Through an informal relationship with a treating center in London, between 2015 and 2019, 16 people with MS were referred to London from MS specialists in St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, some of whom were accepted for treatment and a small number were deemed not suitable.

Since December 2019, through the Neurology Clinical Programme, a national multidisciplinary meeting has been established every two-months for Consultant Neurologists to discuss people with MS who may be appropriate for AHST and to seek input from Haematologists and other specialists enabling a more efficient referral pathway to London.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations