



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Rannan na nOspideil Ghearmhíochaine
Aonad 4A – Áras Dargan
An Ceantar Theas
An Bothar Mileata
Cill Mhaighneann
BÁC 8

Acute Operations
Health Service Executive
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Heuston South Quarter
Military Road
Kilmainham
Dublin 8.

Date: 11th July 2022

Deputy Paul Murphy
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2.

PQ 35791/22 * To ask the Minister for Health the number of six planned Long-Covid at hospitals nationwide that are open at present, the expected opening dates for the unopened clinics; and if any of the clinics will be accepting children as patients and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Murphy,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Response:

The HSE recognises the need to provide follow up support and care for patients experiencing prolonged signs and symptoms of Covid-19. In response to this it has developed an Interim Model Of Care (MoC) for Long Covid which was finalised in September 2021. The aim of the MoC is to provide a national approach to the provision of services and supports for patients experiencing prolonged symptoms of Covid-19. It sets out a framework for the provision of these services and supports spanning General Practice, Community Services, Acute Hospitals and Mental Health Services. The resultant Interim MoC recommended the development of eight Post-Acute Clinics and six Long Covid clinics.

The aim of Post-Acute Covid clinics is to ensure that patients who have recovered from the acute phase of Covid-19 are followed up in a timely and appropriate fashion taking into account factors such as disease severity, likelihood of long term respiratory symptoms and functional disability. Post-Acute Clinics will be led by respiratory consultants and will provide assessment and ongoing care for patients within twelve weeks of infection.

The following eight hospital sites have been nominated as Post-Acute Covid clinics:

- Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown

- Mater University Hospital
- Tallaght University Hospital
- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Letterkenny University Hospital

Long Covid Clinics are a specialist service for patients with signs and symptoms that develop during or after an infection consistent with Covid-19, continue for more than 12 weeks and are not explained by an alternative diagnosis. Long Covid clinics will be led by infectious disease consultants.

The following six hospital sites have been nominated as Long Covid clinics:

- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Beaumont University Hospital
- St. Vincent's University Hospital

Establishment of Post-Acute and Long Covid Clinics will be an initial priority for implementation of the MoC. In some incidences the designated hospital sites are providing Long Covid and Post-Acute clinics on an interim basis while awaiting recruitment of full staffing as per the MoC. St James University Hospital, Galway University Hospital, St Vincent's University Hospital and Beaumont University Hospital are operating Long COVID clinics on an interim basis. Post-Acute Clinics operating on interim basis include Galway University Hospital, Tallaght University Hospital, St James University and Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown

These clinics have been established in response to local need and are leveraging existing resources and capacity. The HSE is now working with these sites to expand their resources to ensure they can meet the requirements of the MoC.

Long Covid clinics and Post-Acute Covid Clinics are adult services and therefore, will not be accepting patients under the age of 16. For children suspected of having Long COVID, their diagnosis and care will continue to be provided by GPs and General Paediatricians. The National Clinical Advisory Group Lead for Children and the Long COVID Programme continues to review new evidence and research as it emerges internationally and will update relevant guidance as appropriate.

At present, patients with persistent symptoms following Covid-19 infection may be followed up by their GP or in hospital settings as clinically appropriate. People in the community who are concerned about persistent symptoms following Covid-19 should contact their GP in the first instance, who will be able to assess and signpost them towards the service most appropriate to their needs, including on-ward referral to a Post-Acute or Long Covid clinic if appropriate.

I trust that this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Dunne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brian Dunne
General Manager
Acute Operations