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**PQ36046/22: To ask the Minister for Health if consideration has been given to including reconstruction after a mastectomy in HSE funding; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Carroll MacNeill,

Recommendation 2.3.4.1 (p.42) of the NCEC National Clinical Guideline number 7: diagnosis, staging & treatment of patients with breast cancer states: "A discussion regarding breast reconstruction should be undertaken with all patients undergoing mastectomy for breast cancer." The timing, type, patient suitability for this procedure, and the potential impact of radiotherapy on breast reconstruction should be the basis of this discussion with the patient.

These National Clinical Guidelines are considered the standard of care for patients with a breast cancer diagnosis. Reconstruction after a mastectomy would therefore be included within the hospital surgical budget, rather than as a separate funding stream.

It is acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated any delays experienced in access to surgical reconstruction. In the context of unprecedented pressure on the health services resulting from the pandemic, cancer treatment surgeries have been prioritised over elective surgery and reconstruction

Yours sincerely



Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide  
National Director  
National Cancer Control Programme