



BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

14th July 2022

PQ36950/22-Deputy Róisín Shortall- To ask the Minister for Health the current pathway for accessing Paxlovid for patients at the highest risk of serious illness or death from Covid-19; if his attention has been drawn to reports of patients' difficulty accessing this medicine within five days (details supplied); the steps that are being taken to address barriers to treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

Thank you for your representation.

Paxlovid has been available for Irish patients since April 2022.

There are two pathways established for the prescribing the oral anti-viral Paxlovid:

1. Community pathway

Paxlovid is available for GPs to prescribe for patients in the community who do not require admission to hospital. Dispensing of Paxlovid occurs in community pharmacies.

2. Hospital inpatient pathway

Paxlovid is also prescribed by hospital clinicians. This will be dispensed by the hospital pharmacy.

The Therapeutic Advisory Group (TAG) have developed clinical guidance for the current COVID-19 therapeutic agents available. A clinical framework has been developed to very high risk and high-risk populations who are eligible for Covid-19 Therapeutics.

The clinical guidance has been revised to expand the eligibility criteria for therapeutics. The changes to the guidance means that eligible patients will only need to return a positive Antigen test in order to avail of Paxlovid. These changes have been communicated to acute hospitals and GP's.

There are a number of resources and supports available to assist prescribers in determining eligibility and suitability for treatment. There is ongoing engagement with advocacy groups as



part of the Covid-19 Vaccine Network to raise awareness among at-risk patients about the new COVID-19 treatments available in Ireland.

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Hayden'.

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO