

Brendan Griffin TD
Fine Gael
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

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30th June 2022

PQ31725/22: To ask the Minister for Health the reason that an organisation (details supplied - Kerry Cancer Support Link Bus) in County Kerry does not receive State funding from his Department; if this matter will be reviewed in view of the crucial role that this organisation plays in the provision of ancillary health services for patients in the county; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Griffin,

Kerry Cancer support services provides a transport service to cancer patients, this is a voluntary service. NCCP do not fund transportation as the funding utilised for “once off grants” are provided for core psycho-social support services including; information and support, counselling and survivorship programmes. The Kerry Cancer Support organisation did receive a small COVID grant in 2020 as the criteria that year was more flexible. The Department of Rural and Community Development also provided a stability grant funding in 2020 to maintain services during COVID.

Although NCCP do not provide direct transport services, we collaborate and financially support the Travel 2 Care programme administered by the Irish Cancer Society. This fund is available to patients in need attending any of the designated centres or satellites, for cancer tests or treatments. However there are also distance criteria and a limit to the number of submitted applications that can be accommodated.

The Volunteer Driver Service (*previously Care to Drive*) is wholly funded by the Irish Cancer Society. As such, the NCCP do not have any input into the patient referral process. Any referrals made to the service are assessed against criteria that the hospital has agreed.

The Irish Cancer Society lists all participating hospital on their website [here](#). The service has been available to patients attending the hospital since 2012 and has been heavily advertised locally as such.

If you have any further queries on the criteria or the availability of the Volunteer Driver Service or the Travel2Care schemes, please contact Gail Flinter, Patient Travel and Financial Support Manager in the Irish Cancer Society on email: gflinter@irishcancer.ie .

Yours sincerely



Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide
National Director
National Cancer Control Programme

