



Oifig um Cheannasáí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín
Luimneach
Teil: 061 483722

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
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4th July 2022

Deputy Michael McNamara
Leinster House,
Kildare St.,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 32495/22 – “To ask the Minister for Health the status of the recruitment of specialist roles at the proposed chronic disease management hub at Station Road, Ennis, County Clare; when the hub will become fully operational; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy McNamara,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

I can advise that the Mid West Community Health Care Organisation has been funded for the provision of two Chronic Disease Teams in the Mid West, one team for Limerick (Phase 1) and an enhanced Chronic Disease Team for Co. Clare and North Tipperary (Phase 2).

The Chronic Disease Service focuses on the Chronic Disease Groups: Cardiovascular Disease, Respiratory Disease (including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Asthma) and Type II Diabetes. The teams will work and support their colleagues in General Practice, Primary and Secondary care to develop and implement ambulatory care pathways to prevent and manage complex chronic diseases.

A total of 20.1 WTE have been assigned for a Chronic Disease Team in Co. Clare with 5.5 WTE currently in post. A Clinical Nurse Specialist in Diabetes commenced in May 2022 and is providing a community based service in General Practitioner (GP) practices in Co. Clare. A Clinical Nurse Specialist in Cardiology and a Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist in Respiratory have both recently taken up post and are developing clinical pathways for community services in these specialties. There is a total of 1.5 WTE Podiatrists in post including a Clinical Specialist who are providing podiatry services across the region. The Operational Lead and Project Officer have both commenced. Other staff are at an advanced stage of recruitment include Senior and Staff Grade Dieticians, Diabetic Clinical Nurse Specialists, Senior Physiotherapists, Respiratory Cardiology Clinical Nurse Specialists, a Staff Nurse and administrative support. Recruitment is ongoing for all grades of staff.

The Health Promotion services have expanded and will support the Chronic Disease services by providing additional preventative programmes such as “Making Every Contact Count”, which is a programme that builds the capacity of health care workers to signpost and/or refer patients to preventative programmes. Three additional Quit Mid West, Stop Smoking Clinics have commenced

in Co. Clare in Kilrush, Ennis and Shannon. “Minding Your Well Being”, a programme specifically for people with Chronic Disease has commenced across the Mid West. A “Self Management Support Programme” for empowering those living with a Chronic Disease to self manage their condition is due to commence in September 2022 in Ennis.

In addition to the above posts for the Chronic Disease services in Co Clare, additional clinical and diagnostic chronic disease posts are being recruited for the region through the University Hospital Limerick Group. The posts include a Consultant in Respiratory Medicine with a Special Interest in Chronic Disease and a Consultant in Cardiology with a special interest in Chronic Disease Respiratory alongside Cardiac Physiologists and administrative support. A Senior Medical Laboratory Scientist has commenced and with the provision of this post NTproBNP blood screening is now available to General Practitioners.

It is difficult to say when the full Chronic Disease team will be in place as some grades of posts are proving challenging to recruit. It is estimated that the full roll out of the Chronic Disease service across the country will take approximately 3 years.

The Chronic Disease Hub will be based in the new Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare and it is anticipated that the new Primary Care Centre will be operational in Quarter 4, 2022. The services will be provided on a hub and spoke model across the county. The following services will be provided within the hub and on an outreach basis across the county, where possible, including clinical review and care by specialist community teams:

Cardiac Rehabilitation; Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services; Diabetes Self Management Education services and Diagnostic services.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,


Margaret Costello,
Head of Service
Primary Care