



National Hepatitis C Treatment Programme
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9th June 2022

**Deputy Brendan Griffin, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

Dear Deputy Griffin,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your Parliamentary Question below which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

PQ 27049/22: 'To ask the Minister for Health the status of the implementation of the Hepatitis c strategy; if a screening programme for persons born between 1965 and 1985 is being considered; and if he will make a statement of the matter'.

I refer to the above parliamentary question in relation to (1) the Hepatitis c Strategy and (2) a screening programme for persons born between 1965 and 1985 and I wish to advise as follows:

(1) Status of the Hepatitis C Strategy

The implementation of the Hepatitis C Strategy is well advanced and we are on target to meet our goal of elimination in Ireland by 2030.

(2) A Screening Programme for persons born between 1965 and 1985

The Department of Health commissioned a HIQA health technology assessment (HTA) with regard to the feasibility of national birth cohort screening. The results of that HTA were published in 2021 and recommended a national program based on current estimated prevalence rates (<https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/health-technology-assessment/hta-birth-cohort-testing-hepatitis-c>). In collaboration with HIQA the National Hepatitis C Treatment Programme is currently carrying out a national sero-prevalence study to estimate the prevalence of hepatitis C virus infection in the Irish birth cohort (1965-1985). The study is being carried out using residual sera from routine tests sent in to general hospitals by general practitioners. To date 6,000 samples have been analysed and the results are expected within the next six weeks. These results will help inform decisions about the implementation of a birth cohort screening programme for hepatitis C.

Yours sincerely,

**Marie O'Grady
General Manager
Enhanced Community Care Programme & Primary Care Contracts & Hepatitis C**