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19th May, 2022

Deputy Róisín Shortall, TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

RE: PQ22426/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of applications for (details supplied) that were submitted by individual hospitals for people with diabetes over 21 years of age; the number that were approved; the number that were refused in each of the years 2017 to 2022, in tabular form; if there are plans to remove the age restriction; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Clinical Programme for Diabetes on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

For those living with diabetes, monitoring glucose levels on a daily basis is the key to avoiding complications. It is recommended that people on insulin test a minimum of 4 times per day. This level of frequent testing using traditional finger pricking devices can be painful, inconvenient and difficult to achieve as people go about their daily life. Freestyle Libre (FSL) is a disruptive technology that helps people living with type 1 diabetes move away from the hassle of multiple daily finger pricks (to check their blood sugar levels) and instead enables needle-free monitoring of blood sugar by scanning over a sensor inserted on the arm.

Freestyle Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring (FGM) sensors were made available on an administrative basis to people with Type 1 Diabetes in line with a recommendation accepted by the HSE from the Health Technology Advisory Group from 1st April 2018. Consultant Endocrinologists may apply to the HSE, on behalf of specific patients, for reimbursement support of Freestyle Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring (FGM) sensors. The application process is undertaken by means of a dedicated online portal, which has been operational since 3rd April 2018. In line with the recommendations outlined of the Health Technology Assessment Group, access to this product was made available to children and young adults (4 -21 years). However, the application process does cater for the Consultant to make an application in very exceptional circumstances for a type 1 diabetic patient outside of this group. The National Clinical Programme for Diabetes liaised with HSE Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service to obtain the below figures.



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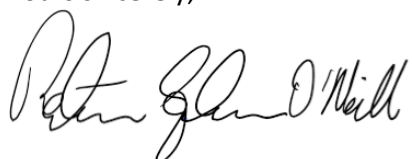
<i>Freestyle Libre Sensors</i>	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
<i>No of applications received for persons 22 years of age and over</i>	589	739	543	884	2755
<i>No of applications approved for persons 22 years of age and over</i>	384	406	266	606	1662
<i>No. of applications rejected for persons 22 years of age and over</i>	205	333	277	278	1093

The above table outlines the number of applications from the years 2018-2021 (inclusive) made by a Consultant Endocrinologist or Diabetes Nurse Specialists through the online portal for those who are 22 years and over and the number of applications for these patients that were approved for reimbursement support based on the clinical information provided.

There are no plans to extend the device to all type 1 diabetics in the absence of a cost effectiveness assessment to determine if the product represents value for money.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Patricia Gilsonan O'Neill
General Manager, Business Management Office