



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,  
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Príomhúil

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16<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 22834/22 – To ask the Minister for Health the status of the development of long-Covid clinics and models of care for patients; the locations in which they will open; the overall budget that has been set aside for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**- Fergus O'Dowd**

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Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions (PQ 22834/22), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE Interim Model of Care (MoC) for Long Covid was published in September 2021. The aim of the MoC is to provide a national approach to provision of services and supports for patients experiencing prolonged symptoms of COVID-19. It sets out a framework for the provision of these services and supports spanning General Practice, Community Services, Acute Hospitals, and Mental Health Services. The resultant Interim Model of Care recommended the development of eight Post-Acute Clinics and six Long COVID clinics.

Post-Acute clinics will be led by infectious disease consultants and will provide assessment and ongoing care for patients within twelve weeks of infection. The following sites have been nominated as Post-Acute COVID clinics:

- Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown
- Mater University Hospital
- Tallaght University Hospital
- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Letterkenny University Hospital

Long COVID clinics will be led by infectious disease consultants and will provide assessment and ongoing care for patients with prolonged symptoms of COVID-19 for more than 12 weeks after initial onset of infection. The following hospital sites have been nominated as Long COVID clinics:

- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Beaumont University Hospital



- St. Vincent's University Hospital

The distribution of these clinics was informed on the basis of access to diagnostics and the availability of specialities such as infectious disease and respiratory services. The regional areas selected ensures that each hospital group has access to both Post-Acute and Long COVID clinics and therefore promotes geographical equality.

Some of these clinics are already operational. They have been established in response to local need and are leveraging existing resources and capacity. The HSE is now working with these sites to expand their resources to ensure they can meet the requirements of the Model of Care and what is required within a local context. It is also working with sites that do not already have access to designated clinics so that these can become operational.

Sites are now proceeding with the recruitment of personnel associated with each of the clinics. This includes consultants in the area of infectious diseases, respiratory medicine, neurology and additional multi-disciplinary staff to support the work of these clinics.

The overall costing for the MoC is €6.6 million annually and €2.2 million has been allocated for 2022. Notification has recently been given to all each of the sites that they can proceed with recruitment of the personal associated with each of the clinics. This includes consultants in the area of infectious diseases, respiratory medicine, neurology and additional multi-disciplinary staff to support the work of the clinics.

At present, patients with persistent symptoms following COVID-19 infection may be followed up by their GP or in hospital settings as clinically appropriate. People in the community who are concerned about persistent symptoms following COVID-19 should contact their GP in the first instance, who will be able to assess and signpost them towards the service most appropriate to their needs, including on-ward referral to a Post-Acute or Long COVID clinic if appropriate.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TJ Dunford', written over a horizontal line.

**TJ Dunford**  
Head of Operations - Primary Care  
Community Operations