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Date: 20/05/2022

Deputy David Cullinane TD

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ 23125/22

To ask the Minister for Health the status of the establishment of a programme for women's health in epilepsy within the regional epilepsy centres; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Response:

The National Clinical Programme for Neurology recognises the importance of supporting the specific needs of women with Epilepsy. A detailed National practice guide on the management of women with epilepsy was developed and launched in 2019. This outlines the standards of care before a woman becomes pregnant, during pregnancy, during the post-partum period and into the menopausal stage. It also includes a detailed support for the obstetrics services in the management of seizures and guidance for antenatal care.

Currently, an outreach support service is offered to the maternity hospitals by one specialist nurse. It is anticipated to develop this service further with investment in additional specialist nurses. In February 2022, a proposal for the appointment of Advanced Nurse Practitioners as part of the 'PREVENT' programme implementation and Integrated Maternity Epilepsy Model of Care, was submitted and we await the outcome of same.

Women with epilepsy continue to be assessed, monitored and supported through all the regional epilepsy centres in Ireland.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

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Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations