



Sláinte Ghnéis & Clár Thoirchis Ghéarchéime,
Urlár 4, 89 – 94 Sráid Chéipil,
Baile Átha Cliath 1,
T:01 7959130 Email: info@crisispregnancy.ie
www.sexualwellbeing.ie

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme,
4th Floor, 89 – 94 Capel Street,
Dublin 1.

Deputy Niamh Smyth
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

30th May 2022

PQ ref: 25140/22

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated full-year cost to expand free STI testing and screening services, including self-sampling where appropriate.

Deputy Smyth,

Thank you for your question to the Minister for Health, which was forwarded to my office to respond to you directly.

There is no centralised budget for the range of sexual health services in Ireland providing STI testing services, and it is not possible to provide an estimated full-year cost to expand free STI testing services.

The following provides further information on what is available.

STI services in Ireland are provided through a combination of public, private and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These include general practice, family planning clinics, student health services and dedicated public and private STI clinics. Services are based in primary care, community and hospital settings.¹

Public STI services, which receive direct public funding, are provided at no cost to patients. Public STI services are not funded from a single budget; some receive funding from HSE primary care, some from public health and some from the acute hospitals division.¹ The list of public STI clinics is available [here](#).

STI services provided by NGOs and student health clinics are usually either free or at a subsidised cost, depending on the service. Private STI services and STI testing or

¹ Sexual Health Services in Ireland: A Survey of STI and Contraception Services, HSE June 2018.
https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/survey-of-sexual-health-services_june2018v2.pdf

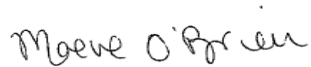
treatment within general practice is provided at a cost to the patient, with medical card/GP visit card holders not having to pay consultation fees.

In 2021, the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) successfully piloted an online (home) STI testing service in Dublin, Cork and Kerry with online provider SH:24. The pilot was funded by the SHCPP and the Government of Ireland Sláintecare Integration Fund 2019. Annual funding of €3m was secured in budget 2022 to roll out the service nationally. The service is currently available in 22 of 26 counties; the final 4 counties will be integrated shortly. <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/>.

Integrating an online STI testing service with established public STI clinics is an effective, efficient way to increase access to and capacity for STI testing, allowing asymptomatic individuals to use the online platform and test for STIs in the comfort of their own homes. Individuals who require further testing and treatment are referred to and seen in the clinical setting, ensuring a seamless individual experience.

For more information on sexual health services and supports, visit <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/>

Yours Sincerely



Maeve O'Brien

Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme, HSE Health and Wellbeing