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18th November 2022

Deputy Canney
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 54445/22: To ask the Minister for Health to clarify whether the €7 million of "recurring funding" mentioned in the HSE reply to PQ Ref 48352/22 & 48354/22 was a one-time piece of expenditure introduced as part of the rollout of abortion in 2019, if it refers to an annual allotment, or something else; and to breakdown the allocation of this €7 million and how it has been spent.

Dear Deputy Canney

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.

In relation to the €7 million of recurring funding, this funding was provided to the HSE in the Letter of Determination 2019 to support the roll-out of termination services in this Acute Sector, as per the HSE's National Service Plan for 2019.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/serviceplans/national-service-plan-2019.pdf>

As outlined in our previous response, this funding was used to recruit additional personnel resources across a range of sites to implement this new service within the hospital sector. Resources supported by this investment included additional consultant obstetricians and gynaecologists, midwives and nurses, ultrasonographers, theatre staff, bereavement specialists, administrators, medical social workers and pharmacists. To date, an additional 73 WTE have been recruited to deliver and sustain termination of pregnancy services within the acute hospital setting. These resources, whilst funded and established utilising funding provided to support termination of pregnancy services, have developed and being embedded within existing gynaecology and maternity services such that termination of pregnancy service is just one of the areas of responsibilities that they hold on the ground.

The funding allocated in 2019 has remained within the base budgets of the respective hospitals and continues to fund the relevant salaries etc.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

D. O'Donnell

Davinia O'Donnell, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme