



Oifig um Cheannasaí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín
Luimneach
Teil: 061 483722

Office of the Head of Service for Primary Care
HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
Ballycummin Ave, Raheen Business Park, Raheen,
Limerick
Tel: 061 483722

28th November 2022

Deputy Michael McNamara
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare St., Dublin 2

Re: PO 56351/22 – “To ask the Minister for Health when the new Chronic Disease Management Hub will become fully operational in Co. Clare; the location, functions and staffing details of the Hub; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy McNamara,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in regard to your parliamentary question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Following on from my response of 4th July 2022 regarding the provision of a Chronic Disease Hub in Co. Clare, I am now in a position to update some of the information provided at that time whilst responding to your recent query:

The Mid West Community Health Care Organisation (CHO3) has been funded for the provision of two Chronic Disease Teams in the Mid West. One team for Limerick (Phase 1) and an enhanced Chronic Disease Team for Co. Clare and North Tipperary (Phase 2). A very significant development in supporting Chronic Disease Services in Co. Clare, is the provision of a purpose built Chronic Disease Hub which will be located in the Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis. It is anticipated that the Primary Care Centre and the Chronic Disease Hub will become operational in December 2022.

The Chronic Disease Service focuses on the Chronic Disease Groups i.e.:

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Respiratory Disease (including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Asthma) and,
- Type II Diabetes

The teams will work and support their colleagues in General Practice, Primary and Secondary care to develop and implement ambulatory care pathways to prevent and manage complex Chronic Diseases.

The following services will be provided within the Hub and on an outreach basis across the county. These services will, where possible, include clinical review and care by specialist community teams:

- Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services
- Diabetes Self Management Education Services
- Cardiac Rehabilitation (will be introduced on a phased basis)
- Diagnostic services for Chronic Disease

A total of 20.1 WTE have been assigned to the Chronic Disease Team in Co. Clare. The following staff/disciplines (approx. 8 WTE in total) are currently in post:

- The Operational Lead, Project Officer and 1.5 WTE of the administrative staff are in post;
- Two Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs) for Diabetes are in post (one commenced in May 2022 and the second CNS commenced in September 2022). The CNSs are providing community based clinical advice and education services to Type II Diabetics in Co. Clare in Health Centres, General Practitioner (GP) practices across the county and in the Chronic Disease Hub when it becomes operational;
- One Clinical Nurse Specialist in Cardiology and one Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist in Respiratory are in post. They are developing clinical pathways and implementing pilot clinics for community services in these specialties in the Mid West. The Respiratory Pilot is based in Nth. Tipperary with plans to commence this service in Co. Clare in the first quarter of 2023. The Cardiology Pilot is commenced on 21st November 2022 in Limerick and will extend to Co. Clare in due course;
- A total of 1.5 WTE Chronic Disease Podiatrists are in post and are providing podiatry services to diabetic clients in Co. Clare. The team consists of one Clinical Specialist Podiatrist, one Senior Podiatrist and one Staff Grade Podiatrist;
- Other posts at an advanced stage of recruitment including a Senior Dietitian, a third Diabetic CNS, a Senior Physiotherapist and Respiratory and Cardiology CNSs.

As previously advised, it is difficult to say when the full Chronic Disease team will be in place as some grades of posts are proving challenging to recruit and recruitment is ongoing for all grades of staff.

As advised in my previous response, additional Chronic Disease Integrated Care Clinical and Diagnostic posts are being recruited for the region through the University Hospital Limerick Group which will also have a commitment to the Chronic Disease Services in Co. Clare. These posts include the following:

- A Consultant in Respiratory Medicine with a Special Interest in Chronic Disease
- A Consultant in Cardiology with a special interest in Chronic Disease, Cardiac and Respiratory Physiologists and administrative support.
- A Senior Medical Laboratory Scientist has commenced and as a result, NTproBNP blood screening is now available to GPs in Co. Clare.

I can also advise that the Health Promotion services have expanded and will support the Chronic Disease services by providing additional preventative programmes such as “*Making Every Contact Count*”, which is a programme that builds the capacity of healthcare workers to signpost and/or refer patients to preventative programmes. Five *Quit Mid West* - Stop Smoking Clinics are running weekly in Co. Clare, in Kilrush, Ennis, Ennistymon and Shannon. A “*Self Management Support Programme*” for empowering those living with a Chronic Disease to self manage their condition took place in September 2022 in Ennis. Further programmes are planned for Kilkee, Ennis and other locations throughout Co. Clare in 2023.

I trust this information addresses the issues raised in your representation.

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Costello
Head of Service
Primary Care