



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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Deputy Denis Naughten TD,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

28<sup>th</sup> October 2022

PQ51235/22\* *“To ask the Minister for Health the current average processing time for the payment of completed applications under the EU Cross Border Directive; the date when current applications being processed were received; the present number of staff processing such claims; the number of claims to date in 2022; the corresponding figures for 2021;; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”*

Dear Deputy Naughten,

Thank you for your parliamentary question referenced above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

I will seek to address your question as comprehensively as I can however if you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

As at the date of this letter the processing times for applications for reimbursements to patients under the Cross Border Directive (CBD) scheme and the Northern Ireland Planned Healthcare Scheme (NIPHS) is circa 9 weeks, i.e. applications received mid-August (16<sup>th</sup> August 2022) are currently being processed.

There are currently 15 staff processing applications for both reimbursement and prior notification under the CBD and NIPHS departments. This level of resourcing is not sufficient for the volume of applications to the schemes, which has continued to grow year on year. It is of note that during the years 2020 and 2021, the backlog which existed was cleared and it was possible to keep the processing up to date. This suggests that the level of current staffing is appropriate to the level of applications during those years. However, since the beginning of 2022 and the end of the COVID restrictions, the numbers of applications has returned to reflect the annual increases of the pre-COVID years. As a result a backlog of applications has developed.

The table below provides the number of applications received and processed and a comparison between 2021 and 2022 as requested.

| <b>Jan-Sept</b>                     | <b>2021</b> | <b>2022</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>No. of applications received</b> | 2,829       | 4,534       |

|                                      |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| <b>No. of applications processed</b> | 2,241 | 3,090 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|

I wish to acknowledged that we received approval to appoint staff to the departments:

| <b>Recruitment</b>            | <b>WTE</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Vacancies (Approval to Hires) | 23         |
| Currently being progressed    | 11         |
| Remaining Vacancies           | 12         |

I have written to the National Recruitment Office to seek priority for the appointment of these staff so that the backlog may be addressed.

I am very genuinely sorry for the delay patients are experiencing in receiving reimbursements. I will continue to seek secure the necessary resources to address this problem.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Donohoe

A/Assistant National Director.