



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Príomhúil

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29th August 2022

**Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 42340/22 – To ask the Minister for Health the status of the development of long-Covid models of care for patients; the way that persons in counties Louth and Meath will be in a position to access long-Covid services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Fergus O'Dowd

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 42340/22) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE wishes to advise that the implementation of the HSE Interim Model of Care (MoC) commenced in early 2022. The aim of the MoC is to provide a national approach to the provision of services and supports for patients experiencing prolonged symptoms of Covid-19. It sets out a framework for the provision of these services and supports spanning General Practice, Community Services, Acute Hospitals and Mental Health Services. The resultant Interim MoC recommended the development of eight Post-Acute Clinics and six Long Covid clinics. The initial priority for implementation of the MoC is the establishment of these specialist Post-Acute and Long COVID clinics as outlined below.

Post-Acute COVID clinics will be led by respiratory consultants. The aim of Post-Acute COVID clinics is to ensure that patients who have recovered from the acute phase of COVID-19 are followed up in a timely and appropriate fashion taking into account factors such as disease severity, likelihood of long term respiratory symptoms and functional disability.

The following eight hospital sites have been nominated as Post-Acute COVID clinics:

- Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown
- Mater University Hospital
- Tallaght University Hospital
- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Letterkenny University Hospital



Long COVID Clinics are a specialist service for patients with signs and symptoms that develop during or after an infection consistent with COVID-19, continue for more than 12 weeks and are not explained by an alternative diagnosis. Long COVID clinics will be led by infectious disease consultants.

The following six hospital sites have been nominated as Long COVID clinics:

- St. James University Hospital
- Cork University Hospital
- University Hospital Galway
- University Hospital Limerick
- Beaumont University Hospital
- St. Vincent's University Hospital

In some incidences the designated hospital sites are providing Long COVID and Post-Acute clinics on an interim basis while awaiting recruitment of full staffing as per the MoC. They have been established in response to local need and are leveraging existing resources and capacity. The HSE is now working with these sites to expand their resources to ensure they can meet the requirements of the MoC and what is required within a local context. It is also working with sites that do not already have access to designated clinics so that these can become operational.

At present, patients with persistent symptoms following Covid-19 infection may be followed up by their GP or in hospital settings as clinically appropriate. People in the community who are concerned about persistent symptoms following Covid-19 should contact their GP in the first instance, who will be able to assess and signpost them towards the service most appropriate to their needs, including on-ward referral to a Post-Acute or Long Covid clinic if appropriate. In the case of patients in Louth and Meath, this may be Beaumont University Hospital, Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown or Mater University Hospital.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán McArt'.

Seán McArt
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations