



4th October 2022

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

PQ Number: 42495/22

To ask the Minister for Health the total current HSE expenditure on needle exchange programmes nationally by county; the total number of needle exchange service users in each county; the estimated investment per service user for same in each of the years 2016 to 2021 and to date in 2022, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Fergus O'Dowd

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

Regarding the categories required in the question above, please see the following considerations to be taken into account when reviewing this data:

- The request for the total current HSE expenditure on needle exchange programmes nationally by county has been broken down into CHO (Community Health Organisation) as this is the best data currently available. The pharmacy needle exchange operates in 90 pharmacies nationwide (2021 figures). There are then supplementary needle exchange and outreach services available in CHO 3, 6, 7 & 9.
- As this is an anonymous service, we are unable to directly estimate unique individuals. The total number of needle exchanges over the year would not be entirely accurate to provide as it is the same people (on average) coming in each month so it is not cumulative. An estimate for the full year of 2021 is that **2989 service users attended needle exchange services**, this is based on dividing the total presentations into 12, which represents, on average, the number of times the same service user would access the present. In some locations, the total list of consumables was provided, and approximations were based made on these to determine the service user amount. Please see below Table 2 for further information.
- The estimated total current HSE expenditure on **needle exchange programmes nationally in 2021 was €680,630** please see below Table 2 for an approximate breakdown of cost.
- Paraphernalia distributed in needle exchange programmes for crack cocaine use was included in the estimate, as it part of the overall service provision, it should be noted that this would result in a rise in the cost associated to the average service user, as this paraphernalia is more expensive to provide than syringes.



- Considering the above, by dividing the total cost into the estimated amount of services users, an **estimated investment per service user is €228 on an annual basis**. Again, please note that this is likely to be an overestimate, considering that we have taken in the full cost allocation for all harm reduction paraphernalia, as well as other non-pay expenses as noted above. As above, the anonymity of the service determines that we are unable to provide an exact cost per service user, and several assumptions and estimates have been made in order to provide somewhat of an estimate to you.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Eamon Keenan
National Clinical Lead - Addiction Services

Table 1- Estimate of the Total Number of Service User

CHO & Counties Covered	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Q1 2022	Total
CHO 1 - Donegal, Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan, Cavan/Monaghan	51	33	19	28	29	25	41	226
CHO 2 - Galway, Roscommon, Mayo	127	124	67	69	54	62	4	507
CHO 3 - Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary/East Limerick	297	254	300	436	67	48	33	1435
CHO 4 - Kerry, North Cork, North Lee, South Lee, West Cork	391	417	434	632	617	668	741	3900
CHO 5 - South Tipperary, Carlow/Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford	355	356	241	350	317	367	383	2369
CHO 8 - Laois/Offaly, Longford/Westmeath, Louth/Meath	452	414	353	465	367	366	327	2744
Total	1673	1598	1414	1980	1451	1536	1529	11181 *
Additional CHO & Counties Covered	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YTD Q3 '22	Total
CHO 3 Additional - ALDP	162	147	142	110	338	335	288	1522
CHO 6 & 7	387	451	451	503	820	729	582	3922
CHO 9	369	291	472	401	356	389	257	2536
Total	918	889	1065	1014	1514	1453	1127	7980 *
Total Per Year	2591	2487	2479	2994	2965	2989	2656	19161 *

* This is based on dividing the number of syringes provided into 12 which has been taken as an estimated attendance rate across 6 CHOs. In certain areas, the total list of consumables was provided, and approximations were based made on these to determine the service user amount.

Table 2 - Cost of Needle Exchange Programme

Pharmacy Needle Exchange Programme (Covers CHO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YTD Q3 '22	Total
Total	551314	610071	698328	667049	594583	434403	542160	4097908
CHO & Counties Covered Outside of Pharmacy Needle Exchange	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YTD Q3 '22	Total
CHO 3 Additional - ADLP	10828	9788	12110	9000	33561	31227	32105	138620
CHO 6 & 7	215000	215000	215000	215000	215000	215000	161250	1451250
CHO 9	2984	2912	5062	5647	4844	10662	7996	40108
Total	225828	224788	227110	224000	248561	246227	193355	1629978
Total Per Year	777142	834859	925438	891049	843144	680630	735515	5727886
Counties Covered within CHOs								
CHO 1 - Donegal, Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan, Cavan/Monaghan								
CHO 2 - Galway, Roscommon, Mayo								
CHO 3 - Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary/East Limerick								
CHO 4 - Kerry, North Cork, North Lee, South Lee, West Cork								
CHO 5 - South Tipperary, Carlow/Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford								
CHO 6 - Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East								
CHO 7 - Kildare/West Wicklow, Dublin West, Dublin South City, Dublin South West								
CHO 8 - Laois/Offaly, Longford/Westmeath, Louth/Meath								
CHO 9 - Dublin North, Dublin North Central, Dublin North West								

Table 3 - Estimate of Cost Per Service User

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YTD Q3 '22
Total Per Year	777142	834859	925438	891049	843144	680630	735515
Total Per Year	2591	2487	2479	2994	2965	2989	2656
Estimate of Cost Per SU	300	336	373	298	284	228	277