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28th September 2022

Deputy Farrell
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 44868/22: To ask the Minister for Health the follow-up supports that are available within the public health system for women who start menopause as a result of prophylactic surgery; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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.

A key piece of work for the National Women's and Infants Health Programme for 2021 and 2022 was working collaboratively with secondary care providers regarding the development of specialist menopause clinics on a regional basis. While it is envisaged that the vast majority of care in the area of menopause should be provided for in the primary setting, these speciality clinics will provide care for those whose symptoms require more specialist interventions. These clinics will accept referrals from GPs in their surrounding catchment areas, providing specialist medical advice and management to a cohort of symptomatic menopausal women.

The development of this specialist service was planned to roll-out on a phased basis. The first site for this specialist service was the National Maternity Hospital and with support from NWIHP, this clinic is fully operational as of December 1st, 2021. Five additional clinics were funded in 2022 and included the Rotunda, the Coombe, Galway, Limerick and Cork. It is envisaged that all five will be deployed by the end of 2022/early 2023.

Women who undergo prophylactic surgery such as prophylactic oophorectomy because of, for example, an elevated risk for breast cancer can be referred to a specialist complex menopause service for bespoke and personalised menopause support.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mary-Jo Biggs, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme

