



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

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26th September 2022

**Deputy Mairéad Farrell,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 45542/22 – To ask the Minister for Health the neuro rehabilitation supports which are being made available for long-Covid patients; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Mairéad Farrell

Dear Deputy Farrell,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 45542/22) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE recognises the need to provide follow up support and care for patients experiencing prolonged signs and symptoms of Covid-19. In response to this it has developed an Interim Model of Care (MoC) for Long Covid which was finalised in September 2021. The aim of the MoC is to provide a national approach to 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 MoC recognises that Long Covid is associated with a myriad of different symptoms, which often fluctuate, overlap and can affect any system in the body. Management of Long Covid, therefore requires a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach spanning numerous different disciplines and specialities. The resultant MoC for Long Covid, therefore proposes the development of three different types of specialist clinics; Post-Acute, Long Covid and neuro-cognitive.

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. Post-Acute Clinics will be led by respiratory consultants and will provide assessment and ongoing care for patients who have been hospitalised and/or have persistent respiratory symptoms.

The following 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 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

A tertiary neuro-cognitive clinic will be located at St James's University Hospital. The aim of this clinic to provide further assessment, treatment planning and optimization of patients who are experiencing persistent neurological symptoms, associated with their Long Covid diagnosis. This clinic will be led by a consultant neurologist and supported by multi-disciplinary team. There will be close collaboration between St James's Hospital and other Long Covid sites to ensure a holistic, integrated approach to patient care.

It should be noted that all Post-Acute and Long Covid clinics will be supported by a multi-disciplinary team and will have access to various different allied health therapists and mental professionals to support patients in their recovery. These health professionals will all have expertise in the management of Long Covid and its associated symptoms, including neurological sequelae.

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.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán McArt', written in a cursive style.

Seán McArt
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations

