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20th April 2023

Deputy Murnane O'Connor,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 16687/23: To ask the Minister for Health if there are plans to make the non-invasive prenatal tests available free of charge to all pregnant women; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Murnane O'Connor,

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.

The HSE is currently undertaking a Review of Termination of Pregnancy Services, as provided under Section 11 of the Health Regulation of Pregnancy Act. Section 11 of the Act, provides the legislative framework for the provision of termination of pregnancy services in circumstances where there is present a condition likely to lead to the death of the fetus. As part of the Review a baseline assessment of current practices, protocols and pathways for screening, diagnosis and management of fetal anomalies has been undertaken.

In addition, a review of international practices with regard to prenatal screening and diagnostic services has been conducted. Work is nearing conclusion with the final recommendations due to go to the HSEs Chief Clinical Officer (CCO), as commissioner of the Review, later this month.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Davinia O'Donnell, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme