



**Ceann Seirbhíse, Cúraim Príomhúil**  
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Cabhán Dún na nGall  
Liatroim Muineachán, Sligeach  
An Clochar, Sráid an Choláiste, Béal Átha  
Seanaidh, Co Dhun na nGall, F94 TPX4

**Head of Service, Primary Care**  
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20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Deputy Pádraig MacLochlainn  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**Re: PQ ref 7382/23: To ask the Minister for Health the HSEs plans for improving the delivery of primary care diagnostic services across County Donegal in the time ahead and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy MacLochlainn

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 for Community Healthcare Cavan Donegal Leitrim Monaghan Sligo.

The Donegal Chronic Disease Management (CDM) service offers a clinical site outside of the acute hospital setting which supports people living with chronic disease across Co. Donegal. It offers them access to services and specialist teams, both in the Errigal CDM hub in Letterkenny and in community locations close to their homes, through the provision of spoke clinics at community sites within the four community network areas in Donegal. It is an integrated service delivered 80% in the community and 20% in the acute setting forming tangible links between primary and secondary care.

Access to community diagnostic services is provided through the following:

- Community Echo service – Cardiology: The Chief Cardiac Physiologist is based in the Errigal CDM hub. This Community Echo service, located in the Errigal CDM hub and also outreaching to community locations within the four network areas, allows GPs direct access to Cardiac ECHO for the diagnosis of patients with suspected heart failure. This results in earlier diagnosis of heart failure, early intervention and empowers patients to self-manage their conditions. Currently this service is limited to heart failure only as we have not secured funding for a dedicated Integrated Cardiology Consultant to enable further development of the service. Our vision for this service is that on appointment of an integrated consultant cardiologist, we would expand this service to include the full suite of cardiac investigations.
- Community Spirometry Service – Respiratory: This service will consist of a Respiratory Physiologist who will provide a community spirometry service to offer full Pulmonary Function Testing. This service is currently under development and will commence in the Errigal CDM hub when recruitment is complete and the equipment has been procured (currently underway). The vision for this service is that it will provide direct access for GPs to spirometry to enable the early diagnosis and intervention required for patients with respiratory disease in Donegal.



- Radiology service in the Errigal CDM hub: Although not directly linked to the CDM service, the fact that this service is based on-site at the CDM hub allows for ease of referral for patients attending the CDM service. All plain film x-ray referrals from GPs are sent to the CDM hub rather than to LUH, thus reducing the flow to the acute setting.

The CDM pathways and protocols are developed with input from both acute hospital consultants who have agreed to provide clinical governance and with GPs in the community who provide governance for the patients they refer into the service. We are heartened by the progress we have made in recent times in relation to the provision of community diagnostics through the CDM Service and look forward to developing upon this further as resources allow.

I trust that this is of assistance, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mandy Doyle'.

**Mandy Doyle**  
**Ceannasaí Seirbhíse, Cúram Príomhúil**  
**Cúram Sláinte Pobail Cabhán Dún na nGall Liatroim Muineachán Sligeach**

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