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Deputy Réada Cronin TD

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Dublin 2

PQ 63487/22

To ask the Minister for Health the plans that are in place to recruit more neurologists given the unacceptable and potentially-dangerous length of time that patients are forced to spend on waiting lists (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cronin,

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.

Response:

The National Clinical Programme for Neurology (NCPN) recognizes that skilled and highly trained staff add value to Neurological services and NCPN endorses the expansion of the workforce dedicated to Neurology and in line with the Neurology Model of Care (2016) and Sláintecare. In 2021/22 five new Consultant Neurology posts have been secured for Sligo, Limerick, St James Hospital Dublin, Cork and

Tullamore. This posts in Neurology are in geographic regions of greatest need will begin in part to close the significant gap in Neurology, and reduce the very significant geographic inequity.

NPCN recognize that additional investment is required in various specialty areas of Neurology, so NCPN plans to incrementally make submissions for funding over the next number of years in line with Hub and Spoke model for Neurology, to increase the workforce in Neurology centers nationally specifically the NCPN recognises the added value provided by Specialist nurses, particularly in the management of Headache and Epilepsy.

In this context, the NCPN supports the development of Advanced Nurse Practitioner posts in Neurology to support the management of chronic conditions including Headache, Epilepsy and other disorders.

A further submission was made in 2022 for additional posts to continue pathway development and implementation and will be considered as part of the 2023 estimates process. The finalization of the national service plan is ongoing which will determine the HSE's capacity to support new service developments

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations