



Colm Burke, T.D.  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

25<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**PQ: 34337/23:**

**To ask the Minister for Health to confirm what action he, his Department and the HSE will take to improve the efficiency of the high-tech medication scheme as there are delays in the supply of medication as pharmacies cannot request stock until prescriptions have been received from consultants; and if he will make a statement on the matter.-Colm Burke**

Dear Deputy Burke,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (Reference 34337/23), which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The High Tech Arrangements which commenced in 1996 provide for the supply and dispensing of High Tech medicinal products through community pharmacies. High Tech medication is hospital consultant initiated. In order to qualify for reimbursement support by the HSE, patients must be ordinarily resident in the state with established eligibility.

The High Tech Hub Ordering and Management system was deployed on a phased basis commencing in December 2017. This system provides a track and trace model for prescription generation, ordering and supply across the main stakeholders – the hospital, community pharmacy, high tech supplier and patient with end to end assurance, visibility on spend and also minimise waste. The current spend on High Tech medicines are over €1 billion and therefore it is imperative to have the current operational system in place.

The High Tech Hub is approved under legislation for the electronic transfer of prescriptions since August 2020. Therefore, High Tech prescriptions generated on the Hub are immediately available to the nominated community pharmacy when confirmed by the hospital prescriber. There is no requirement for the patient to present with a signed copy of the High Tech prescription form. The pharmacy get a notification for each prescription that is generated where they are the patient's nominated pharmacy. This minimises the delay in patient accessing the high tech medication prescribed.

Pharmacies cannot order High Tech medicines in the absence of a legally valid prescription which outlines the intended directions for use and dosages by the hospital prescriber. This in turn reduces stock wastage and ensures that these high cost items are managed appropriately by the HSE.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Suzanne Doyle  
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement Service