

9th August, 2023.

Mr. Sean Sherlock, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 36433/23

"To ask the Minister for Health what governance procedures are in place between the HSE and Southdoc and its subsidiaries in respect of any financial transfers between the HSE and SouthDoc under the SLA."

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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.

South West Doctors on Call Limited is an Out of Hours Family Doctor service for urgent medical care in Counties Cork and Kerry with its administrative headquarters and call centre in Killarney, Co Kerry. It has a membership of over 500 GPs and a network of 26 treatment centres of which eight are overnight and supported by a fleet of 19 vehicles, which are fully equipped for home visit situations.

SouthDoc provides a medical service to a population of approximately 736,000 in addition to the 3.3M visitors to the area, and dealt with over 231,000 patient contacts in 2022.

SouthDoc, like all agencies funded by the HSE through a Section 39 Service Level Agreement (SLA), provide services to the HSE based on the terms agreed within the SLA which are agreed on an annual basis. The SLA sets out the terms of engagement between the HSE and the agency, which is recognised as the 'Provider' of services, and the quantum of services to be delivered by the Provider and the funding which the HSE will pay to the Provider for provision of such services.

As a service provider funded by the HSE pursuant to Section 39 of the Health Act 2004 South West Doctors on Call Company Limited by Guarantee receives an annual funding allocation for the provision of the above out of hour's service.

In essence, the Governance is covered under the Internal Controls Framework and Principles and National Financial Regulations and this is evidenced through the Service Level Agreement (SLA) contract management process. SLA are legal contracts entered into by HSE and providers, funding provided is set out in SLA approved in Quarter 1 each year and updated at end of year to reflect the amount of funding for the Quantum of service agreed. The contract management process include Performance Management, engagement with agencies such as SouthDoc to regularly review their performance and their financial information, including Annual Financial Statements and Annual Financial Monitoring Report (AFMR).

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Moriarty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Michael Moriarty
Acting Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare