



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta
Géaroibriochtaí

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Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

6th July 2023

PQ 31610/23 - To ask the Minister for Health the reason why seriously ill young infants have to travel abroad for ECHMO treatment; if there are plans to make this treatment available in Ireland for all children; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Pearse Doherty

Dear Deputy Doherty,

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.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) have advised:

CHI currently provide a Cardiac Extracorporeal Life Support (ECLS), service that commenced in 2005 as part of the National Congenital Cardiothoracic Programme.

CHI at Crumlin has developed a world class Cardiac ECLS programme and have supported 233 children on ECLS at CHI at Crumlin since 2005.

This programme has been granted the Award for Excellence (Silver) by ELSO in 2010, 2012, 2014 and Award for Excellence (Gold) Award in 2017 and 2020.

Respiratory Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO), also known as Respiratory ECLS, is not yet a service provided in CHI.

The development of a Respiratory ECMO programme would have an impact on additional services. This includes intensive care, neonatology, general surgery, paediatric cardiology, cardiothoracic surgery and availability of perfusion, theatres, radiography and ultra-sonography, biomedical engineering, genetics, occupational therapy and developmental expertise.

In order, to support this service need; a Model of Care requires development to determine how and where patients are managed and a detailed Business Case submitted to outline the need. This would require the appointment of Consultants from these relevant areas (Paediatric Intensive Care Neonatology) with specialist training in Respiratory ECMO to oversee this service.



This may amount to 15 children a year who would need respiratory ECMO "All-Island". However, unlike the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, we would not have the large volumes to provide a retrieval ECMO service, so children who are deteriorating and might need respiratory ECMO would need to be transferred to CHI ICU early in case they would need this service. This might mean 30-40 children would need to have their care shifted to an ICU in CHI from the NICU's around the country and from Temple Street ICU or The Royal Children's Hospital in Belfast ICU.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Nessa Lynch', written over a horizontal line.

Nessa Lynch
General Manager
Acute Operations