

14th March 2023

Deputy Holly Cairns, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 10586/23

“To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the provision of funding for a service (details supplied) to bring patients from Cork South West to CUH to receive cancer health care.”

Details Supplied: Cancer Connects

Dear Deputy Cairns,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

As you will be aware, Cancer Connect is a not for profit organisation with charitable status that co-ordinates transport to Cork hospitals for passengers attending Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy treatments, and cancer related appointments. It has been in operation since 2011 and provides a free, flexible and confidential service, which runs five days a week. The service is provided by volunteer drivers. Transport for passengers was offered in West Cork originally, but due to growing demand, the service is now offered throughout County Cork, with the exception of City Suburbs and surrounds.

As well as Cancer Connect there are a number of other voluntary organisations such as Cark ARC Cancer Support House in Cork and Recovery Haven Cancer Support House in Kerry which provide valuable services to people with cancer, by way of respite, travel, counselling etc.

In 2022 Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was able to provide Cancer Connect with core funding of €20,000 for the first time. The funding is a contribution towards the employment of a manager to support the development of the service. In addition; we were also in a position to provide Cancer Connect with once off funding totally €50,000 in 2022.

Notwithstanding the above contributions, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare does not get funding to support Cancer Connect and other such organisations directly and certainly not to the extent that we would wish. In recognition of the valuable service which they provide I wrote to the head of the National Cancer Support Programme last year to have funding for such services included in their submission to the Estimates 2023 process and that this funding should be ideally provided on a roll over basis. I have recently again has sought clarification from the National Cancer Control Programme as to any funding

availability in 2023 for services such as Cancer Connect and other supporting services and I await a response on same.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Michael Fitzgerald
Chief Officer

