



11<sup>th</sup> April, 2023

Deputy Louise O'Reilly, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**RE: PQ 14774/23**

**To ask the Minister for Health what funding has been made available for the national stroke strategy; what is the funding being used for; what actions are being implemented in 2023 as part of the national stroke strategy; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

Thank you for your representation that the Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you. I have consulted with the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Stroke on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

The HSE National Stroke Strategy 2022-2027<sup>1</sup> is underpinned by four key pillars of care comprising **prevention; acute care and cure; restoration to living; research and education**. Each pillar plans to lead out on a number of initiatives which will aim to improve stroke services nationally and are aligned with Sláintecare, integrated care and the work of other HSE national clinical programmes.

The 2023 approved level of expenditure for HSE (2023 Letter of Determination) identified an allocation of €4.9 m for implementation of HSE's Stroke Strategy, factoring resourcing requirements, totalling 27.8 WTEs and €3.6m for non-pay to deliver key priority actions in 2023.

The following new services and initiatives are planned for 2023:

Pillar	Outcome	Deliverable
Prevention	Reduction in the number of strokes per year by identifying high prevalence risk factors for stroke.	Expansion of the current GP contract to include hypertension management for >18s Approved pathways for the diagnosis and management of Atrial Fibrillation and hypertension.
Acute care and cure	Recruitment of posts, including 4 WTE Consultants and 4 WTE Speech and Language Therapists	To enable 24/7 access to emergency acute stroke care in relevant sites, to improve access to endovascular thrombectomy (EVT) for patients with large vessel occlusion and to optimise patient safety in relation to post stroke swallow screening

Pillar	Outcome	Deliverable
<b>Rehabilitation and Restoration to Living</b>	Recruitment of Early Supported Discharge (ESD) teams to complete Phase 1 of ESD implementation (10 ESD teams)	Improved patient functional outcomes and provide a high levels of patient satisfaction by establishing ESD service to enable all appropriate stroke patients to have access to skilled multidisciplinary rehabilitation teams in their own home. This outcome will reduce hospital length of stay by 5 to 7 days per patient.
	Recruit 2 WTE psychologists	Establish psychology services in two acute hospitals to improve access for stroke patients
<b>Education and Research</b>	Establish Stroke Research Fellowships	Support research in stroke, leading to progression of treatment options for patients
	Recruit a QI Stroke lead	A QI lead will be recruited who's role will be to develop and update evidence-based clinical guidelines for stroke and to ensure that a systematic QI approach is taken to address deficits in stroke care
	Development of a QI project to improve swallow screening	Improve patient safety for stoke patients by ensuring that swallow screening occurs in line with national guidelines
	Develop a public awareness campaign	In collaboration with Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) establish a public awareness campaign for radio & social media to improve attendance for patients with suspected stroke at ED within the treatment window (currently this is only 46%)  Plan and develop a sustained public awareness campaign with HSE Communications for television to increase public awareness of the importance of early recognition and intervention for stroke symptoms

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely




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**Anne Horgan**  
General Manager

**References:**

1. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/clinical-strategy-and-programmes/national-stroke-strategy-2022-2027.pdf>