



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
Clár Cúraim Pobail Feabhsaithe &
Conarthaí Príomhchúraim
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte

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**Deputy Catherine Murphy,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.**

11th May 2023

PQ 20500/23 -To ask the Minister for Health his plans to increase direct access to echocardiography for general practitioners through community-based ambulatory care hubs – Catherine Murphy.

Dear Deputy Murphy,

I refer to your parliamentary question, which was passed to the HSE for response.

In line with Sláintecare, the Enhanced Community Care Programme (ECC) objective is to deliver increased levels of health care with service delivery reoriented towards general practice, primary care and community-based services. The focus is on implementing an end-to-end care pathway that will care for people at home and over time prevent referrals and admissions to acute hospitals where it is safe and appropriate to do so, and enable a “home first” approach.

The ECC Programme was allocated €240m for the establishment of 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs), 30 Community Specialist Teams for Older People, 30 Community Specialist Teams for Chronic Disease, national coverage for Community Intervention Teams and the development of a volunteer-type model in collaboration with Alone.

In line with the ECC Programme, the Winter Plan 2020/21 and the National Framework for the Integrated Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease, direct GP access to chronic disease diagnostic services within the community are required to support the provision of person-centered care as close to home as possible. Improved access to chronic disease diagnostic services in the community will allow for timely, accurate diagnosis, early intervention with proactive management of chronic conditions and thus, improved outcomes and hospital avoidance.

In response to your question regarding the increased access to echocardiography for general practitioners through community-based ambulatory care hubs, the table below outlines the additional 32 WTE Senior Cardiac Physiologists to deliver echocardiography services that have been allocated and funded in each CHO and aligned to the acute hospital group.

Some of these services outlined below will commence directly in the Community Specialist Teams for Chronic Disease hubs and others will commence in the aligned hospitals and will then transition to the community hub. Resources have been allocated to support the service developments.



CHO	Areas	Senior Cardiac Physiologists
CHO 1	Letterkenny Cavan Sligo	1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE
CHO 2	Galway Portiuncula Mayo	1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE
CHO 3	Limerick Ennis	1.0 WTE 2.0 WTE
CHO 4	CUH and aligned hospitals University Hospital Kerry	4.0 WTE 1.0 WTE
CHO 5	Kilkenny South Tipperary University Hospital Waterford Wexford University Hospital	1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE
CHO 6	St. Vincent's Hospital	2.0 WTE
CHO 7	St. James' Hospital Tallaght Naas/Kildare	2.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE
CHO 8	Mullingar Portlaoise Our Lady of Lourdes, Drogheda	1.0 WTE 1.0 WTE 2.0 WTE
CHO 9	Mater Misericordiae Hospital Beaumont Hospital Connolly Hospital	1.5 WTE 1.5 WTE 1.0 WTE

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contracts