



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta  
Géaroibríochtaí

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Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

30<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**PQ 23678/23 - To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an outline of the mechanism to access diagnosis and support for long-Covid cases in each of the CHO areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Ó Ríordáin,

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.

The Model of Care (MoC) for Long COVID, published in Sept 2021, established a number of principles to underpin the implementation of the national service. These included:

- The requirement to ensure that as much reablement and rehabilitation care as possible is delivered in the community, and
- The clear definition of referral pathways for GPs, acute and community services.

The proposed framework for implementation of the MoC focuses on a three-tiered approach to service delivery, in recognition of the fact that patients will have different needs depending on the complexity of their symptoms. This tiered approach ranges from patient led self-management, to community and GP led interventions, to specialist consultant led acute hospital clinics.

In order for this approach to be effective the Implementation Team prioritised the development of patient pathways to the post-acute and Long-COVID service, which is accessed through GP referral and National Neuro-cognitive clinic, which is accessed via the nearest Long-COVID clinic. These pathways and the related referral criteria have been agreed and are in place. They ensure that patients are appropriately signposted between community services and clinics and there is cohesion between different services.

Clear guidelines have been developed to ensure that GPs know how and when to refer patients for specialist opinion.

Clinics have clearly defined pathways to ensure referral into appropriate services which may include rehabilitation, psychological support, specialist investigation or treatment, or to social care support services or the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.



Research is constantly evolving in the area of Long-COVID treatment and these pathways and criteria are under regular review.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian Dunne'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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**Brian Dunne**  
**General Manager**  
**Acute Operations**