



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

Seomra 243, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,
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14th June 2023

Deputy Kehoe,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 25916/23 - To ask the Minister for Health if he will confirm the counties that do not provide a person without a full medical card access to public health nurse services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Paul Kehoe

Dear Deputy Kehoe,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 25916/23) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Eligibility for the PHN service is legislated for by the Health Act 1970. In relation to eligibility for community nursing services, section 60 stipulates that persons who have full eligibility for services are entitled to free care at the point of delivery. Referrals are triaged and prioritised by the service in line with the management of referrals accepted to the PHN caseload guideline.

Sections 62 and 66 of the Act provide for the PHN service provision to infants, pre-school and school going children and maternal care, regardless of eligibility status. Those seeking an assessment for home care support are also assessed by the PHN service regardless of their eligibility status. In addition CITs (Community Intervention Teams) provide nursing care to all patients regardless of medical card status for acute episodes of care.

Due to PHN staff shortages Community Health Organisation (CHO) areas may prioritise access to some Public Health Nurse (PHN) services. General Medical Services (GMS) eligibility has been a criteria used for prioritisation. Where this occurs patients are advised in the first instance to contact their GP/Practice Nurse for nursing services.

I trust this is of assistance.

Seán McArt
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations