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Health Service Executive
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PQ 44304/23:- To ask the Minister for Health to provide the details of the training provided to Haemodialysis patients to carry out their own haemodialysis at home; whether self-administered homecare is best international practice, and if he would make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy,

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.

Response:

The vast majority of patients who have end kidney failure treated by dialysis (88%) opt for in-centre haemodialysis. The option to carry out dialysis at home is offered to all medically suitable patients. Those that do opt to carry out dialysis in their own home usually choose to do Peritoneal Dialysis as it is technically less demanding. There are a number of technical and medical restrictions regarding who is suitable for home haemodialysis treatment.

In order to carry out home haemodialysis, the patient must have specialised equipment installed in their own house and have a suitable partner to assist them in the procedure. The tender for the installation and management of this specialised equipment was chosen through the public procurement process and currently there is one provider nationally.

There are currently 6 training units across the country that supervise the management of the home haemodialysis patients. Training is provided by specialised home dialysis training nurses on a one to one basis. It typically takes approximately 6 weeks to train each individual patient but this can vary depending on patients' competency. Training commences in a hospital setting and is transferred to the home setting once the patient is suitably upskilled.

The choice of dialysis modality has not been shown to influence patient outcome. Patients that choose home haemodialysis are typically medically more stable and healthier than in centre haemodialysis patients. The proportion of patients who are doing home haemodialysis in Ireland is consistent with international practice.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

Prof George Mellotte
National Clinical Lead for Renal Services
National Renal Office

