



Deputy Roisin Shortall,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2023

PQ ref 44433/23

**To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the concerning prevalence of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder in Ireland, along with the absence of dedicated health messaging addressing this issue; if there are plans in place to initiate a new public health awareness campaign outlining the dangers of alcohol consumption, and discouraging its use during pregnancy; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The HSE published its Position Paper on the Prevention of FASD in September 2022 with recommended actions. The Position Paper is accessible online at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/alcohol-programme/hse-position-on-prevention-of-fasd.pdf>

The HSE Alcohol Programme continues to work on effective communication to the wider public on the messaging around alcohol and pregnancy. This messaging is regularly communicated in monthly communications campaigns. A more strategic and targeted approach is used for specific campaigns such as FASD Awareness Day (9th September), European Alcohol Awareness Week (27th Nov – 1st December). This is noted as action 4 on the HSE FASD Position Paper.

The HSE Making Every Contact Count (MECC) and SAOR (Support, Ask and Assess, Offer Assistance, Refer) interventions promote routine screening & brief intervention on alcohol for pregnant women; and for those with an alcohol and substance use disorder.

Pursuing and achieving a reduction in the population alcohol per capita (APC) consumption of alcohol is the most effective way to reduce cases of FASD arising. Achieving a reduction in the population APC is a goal of Healthy Ireland. All of government and society needs to support this goal. The Minister for Health recently signed into law regulations providing for pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products and the HSE will continue to support the full implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act, 2018.

Yours Sincerely

*Aleisha Clarke*

Dr Aleisha Clarke  
Mental Health and Wellbeing & Alcohol Programme

Strategy and Research  
HSE