



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

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25th April 2024

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

PQ 13755/24 To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on the current system in place for the provision of prostheses and bras to breast cancer patients (details supplied); if he is aware of any significant delays and difficulties in obtaining a prosthesis and bras following breast cancer treatment for breast cancer patients; the average waiting time for the approval of these items; and if he will make a statement on the matter. (Details supplied: the time taken by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to decide on issuing funding for prostheses and bras to a person; what the requirements are for patients to provide personal information about their bodies and operations, and why this information is required; why there are limitations on the supply of only two bras per year and a new prosthesis every second year to breast cancer patients; if the Minister will confirm that funding in this area is secured and that there is no potential reduction in funding for prostheses proposed either now or in the future)

- Michael Lowry

Dear Deputy Lowry,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 13755/24) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The budget and management of the provision of bras and prosthesis post cancer treatment is a function that currently rests with Community Healthcare Organisations. Their policies and procedures have developed locally and been influenced by a number of factors including historical practices and local budget allocations. The general position in relation to bras and prosthesis post cancer treatment is that 2 bras per year and 1 prosthesis every two years is funded for those with medical card eligibility. As stated, this is not uniform and based on historical practices, therefore levels of provision can differ across the country. We are currently not aware of any significant delays in obtaining a prosthesis and bras following breast cancer treatment for eligible persons.

The service improvement programme for Community Funded Schemes is currently reviewing the process, with existing provisions remaining the same at this time. The aim of the service improvement programme is to develop national evidence based standards, improved procedures and equity in the services available to our service users.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Seán McArt
General Manager Primary Care
National Community Operations