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27<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Deputy Funchion  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 6083/24: To ask the Minister for Health how many pregnancy loss clinics are in operation in Ireland; if there is a staffing shortage at present in these clinics; how often do these clinics offer appointments (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter**

Dear Deputy Funchion,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position on the various areas and issues you raised.

In relation to the provision of care in the area of pregnancy loss, a number of work programmes are underway under the auspices of the HSE's National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) in terms of standardising care and information in this area. Such work programmes include:

- The HSE has in place bereavement supports for women and their families experiencing pregnancy loss across its 19 maternity services and sites. This care is provided in the context of the HSE's National Standards for Bereavement Care, is available to all patients and is inclusive of all types of pregnancy that may be experienced.
- A structured programme of work is underway in relation to the development of a national suite of patient information resources for all types of pregnancy loss inclusive of miscarriage and recurrent miscarriage which will be made available online and also via our 19 maternity sites and services when finalised.
- During the early part of 2023, NWIHP in collaboration with the Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCPI) published a National Clinical Practice Guideline on Recurrent Miscarriage. This guideline has been circulated widely amongst the 19 maternity sites and services and was also shared with other professional bodies such as the ICGP. This guideline sets out and defines the level of care that needs to be made available in the area of recurrent miscarriages including the structure and organisation of that care, and investigations and treatments that should be made available in relation to recurrent miscarriages.

Regarding clinics, at present there are 9 recurrent miscarriages clinics across the country. These are located in Cork, the three Dublin maternity hospitals, Limerick, Galway, Portlincora, Waterford &

Drogheda. Many women experiencing pregnancy loss would be seen in the first instance by their local maternity and gynaecology service, with onward referral occurring if clinically indicated.

NWIHP does recognise this area of care as being a core component of safe, high quality maternity services and acknowledges that further work and investment will be required so as to ensure timely and equitable access across the country to specialised pregnancy loss clinics. As such, guided by best standards as identified in the National Clinical Practice Guideline, NWIHP will continue to work with the Department of Health to advocate for the needs of the service and to secure further investment in this important area of maternity care.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



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**Davinia O'Donnell, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme**