



05/06/2024

Deputy Connolly
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 22448/24: To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the implementation of each of the eight recommendations in the “Overview Report of HIQA’s Monitoring Programme against the National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Service, with a focus on obstetric emergencies” (2020); and if he will make a statement on the matter

PQ 22456/24: To ask the Minister for Health the status of the review of the infrastructural deficits that exist in every maternity unit and hospital, as recommended in a report (details supplied); the status of the implementation plan to bring each maternity unit and hospital into compliance with National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services, National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare and the National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections in the Acute Healthcare Services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Connolly,

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 February 2020 HIQA published a review of their 2016 maternity standards. The review was positive on the level of compliance at hospital level, but did make eight recommendations that need to be implemented. The table below provides a high level overview of recommendation status:

| HIQA Recommendation | Implementation Status |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. The HSE must immediately develop a comprehensive, time-bound and fully costed National Maternity Strategy implementation plan, which spans the remaining time frame of the strategy. | Complete |
| 2. Fully evaluate and develop an implementation plan to address where feasible the totality of infrastructural deficits that exist to bring each maternity unit and hospital into compliance with National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services, National | In Progress |

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| Standards for Safer Better Healthcare and the National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections in the Acute Healthcare Services. | |
| 3. The HSE should conduct a review of current workforce arrangements in each maternity unit or hospital nationally, to determine the required levels of staff and skill-mix needed in the medical specialties of obstetrics, anaesthesiology, paediatrics and neonatology and the professions of midwifery and nursing. | In Progress |
| 4. The HSE must ensure that all clinical staff who are involved in the management of obstetric emergencies have received necessary multidisciplinary training, relevant to their scope of practice, in the areas of obstetric emergency management, cardiotocography interpretation and neonatal resuscitation in line with national standards. | In Progress (Ongoing) |
| 5. The HSE should support and ensure that each hospital group takes immediate action to formally agree and implement mandatory transfer and acceptance protocols. | In Progress |
| 6. The HSE should develop a national system that readily facilitates the sharing of learning from the review of clinical incidents across all maternity services to improve outcomes for women and their babies. | In-Progress (ongoing) |
| 7. The HSE should review the wording of the Maternity Patient Safety Statements currently used by maternity services and remove the word patient from the title and any reference to the Midlands Regional Hospital Portlaoise in the purpose and context section. | Complete |
| 8. The HSE should develop a plan for implementation of the recommendations of this national overview report. It should include clear actions and timelines for completion and include named persons with responsibility and accountability for implementation of these actions. | Complete |

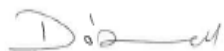
The infrastructural development of maternity services in Ireland is a significant aspect of ensuring the quality and safety of maternal and neonatal care. The need for capital investment is critical to address current deficits and to bring facilities in line with national standards. Each of the 19 maternity units have a development control plan which sets out the medium to long term plan for the campus. Some of the larger, more advanced, infrastructure development plans include:

- The relocation of the National Maternity Hospital from Holles Street to St. Vincents University Hospital campus;
- The proposed relocation of the Rotunda to the Connolly Hospital campus in Blanchardstown and interim relocation of the Rotunda outpatient services (Maternity, paediatric, colposcopy, perinatal mental health and allied health and social work/dietetics) to the Earl Building to enable the development of a critical care wing for on the Rotundas parnell square campus;
And
- The planned new build at Galway University Hospital encompassing the key priorities for the site i.e. a new ED and Women's and Children's block, a new Laboratory, Cancer Centre and bed block on the UHG campus.

These developments are crucial steps towards modernising maternity services and providing state-of-the-art facilities which ensure high standards of care for mothers and infants. Beyond the major capital development plans for new builds and relocations of maternity hospitals, the National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) continues to focus on smaller-scale infrastructure improvements across existing maternity units. These minor developments and enhancements aim to improve the physical environment, enhance patient experience, and support the delivery of high-quality maternity care. Such developments include: the introduction of "Home from Home" rooms designed to provide a more homely and less clinical environment for mothers during labor and postnatal care; Investment in new medical equipment and technology to enhance the quality of care provided to mothers and infants and improvements to the physical environment, including painting, new furnishings, and better lighting, to create a more welcoming and comforting atmosphere for patients and their families.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



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