



5<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

Deputy Alan Kelly, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**RE: 34503/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health if there will be adequate and sustained funding to restore hospital-based cardiac rehab staffing to at least a minimal level, to include the multidisciplinary team required to provide a world-class, high-quality cardiac rehab**

Dear Deputy Kelly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Heart Programme (NHP) on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) has consistently been demonstrated to significantly reduce illness, hospital admissions and death amongst patients with established cardiovascular disease, while also increasing their quality of life.

The development of the National HSE Model of Care for Integrated Cardiac Rehabilitation 2023 (MOC CR)<sup>1</sup> is a major step forward, in that its implementation will ensure that patients living with cardiovascular disease across the country have access to timely, high quality, cardiac rehabilitation care, no matter where they live.

In line with best international evidence and practice, the model advocates for a person-centred approach, with a focus on helping patients to

- manage their condition
- set individualised goals
- receive their rehabilitation service as close to home as possible.

The model also places a focus on encouraging and supporting referral to and attendance at cardiac rehabilitation for those who are traditionally under-referred to cardiac rehabilitation, such as women, older patients and marginalised groups.


The evidence base indicates that, in order to optimise outcomes for patients eligible for cardiac rehabilitation, consideration must be given to maximising recruitment and retention of such patients. Offering increased flexibility in how people can participate in cardiac rehabilitation is key in this regard.

The HSE's MoC CR describes an integrated service across hospital(s) and aligned community specialist teams (CSTs), which serve the population living in their catchment area. It describes how such an integrated service should be delivered across hospital and community. It also identifies the internationally agreed essential staffing requirements to deliver this integrated service across acute and community settings.

As part of the implementation of the recommendations of the MOC CR, the Office of National Clinical Advisor and Group Lead for Chronic Disease (NCAGL CD) and National Heart Programme (NHP) have recently undertaken a National Needs Assessment (final report pending) across the acute cardiac rehabilitation services as well as a review of the staffing gaps in the Chronic Disease Community Specialist Teams (CSTs) in the community hubs.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Horgan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**

**References:**

1. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/model-of-care-for-integrated-cardiac-rehabilitation.pdf>