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Deputy Kerrane,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

19/05/2025

PQ 33070/25: To ask the Minister for Health the reason that supports provided to a child born prematurely with developmental needs in an Irish neonatal intensive care unit are not also available to children born prematurely with developmental needs born in a neonatal intensive care unit in Spain upon their return to Ireland; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Kerrane,

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

Thank you for the above question in relation to the provision of developmental needs services for a premature infant who was born in Spain and the family have now returned to Ireland. All infants are entitled to whatever developmental needs services he/she requires. Where a mother gives birth prematurely while abroad and then returns home when the baby is medically fit to do so.

The access pathway for the mother and her baby is as follows:

1. Go to her GP or public health nurse and get a letter of referral to the paediatric department in her local hospital.
2. The paediatrician will see and assess her baby and then put in place the development needs services that the baby requires.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

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