



Clár Sláinte Ghnéis,
Urlár 4, 89 – 94 Sráid Chéipil,
Baile Átha Cliath 1,
T:01 7959130 Email: sexual.health@hse.ie
www.sexualwellbeing.ie

Sexual Health Programme,
4th Floor, 89 – 94 Capel Street,
Dublin 1.

Deputy Gary Gannon
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

19/03/2025

PQ ref: 9621/25

To ask the Minister for Health the steps she is taking to expand access to PREP by increasing capacity at clinics and removing unnecessary barriers to obtaining appointments, in order to meet the growing demand (details supplied¹); and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Gannon

Thank you for your question to the Minister for Health, which was forwarded to my office to respond to you directly.

The Sexual Health Programme (SHP) acknowledges that there are many reports of individuals facing challenges in seeking PrEP appointments. Services report challenges in meeting new appointment requests and have made significant efforts to improve access within available resources.

Despite the challenges, services continue to see new PrEP users. In 2024, 1,722 individuals accessed PrEP for the first time through the HSE PrEP service.

| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of new PrEP users (first PrEP prescription) | 346 | 1,433 | 1,761 | 1,240 | 1,684 | 1,722 |

At present, there are 13 public PrEP clinics in Ireland, four of which are located in Dublin; and 27 private/GP providers who are approved to prescribe free PrEP, 25 of whom are located in Dublin, one in Cork, one in Meath.

Many measures have already been implemented to increase PrEP capacity. Current and planned measures to increase PrEP service capacity include:

- Administrative efficiencies, including telephone consultations, making the approval process for individuals to access PrEP more efficient and using data from

¹ in light of the growing concerns regarding the accessibility of PREP in Ireland, particularly the lack of transparency and inefficiency in the current system

the PrEP PCRS approval process for monitoring, thus reducing the administrative burden on PrEP services in gathering and providing monitoring data.

- Using the national free home STI testing service for routine STI testing for stable PrEP patients, therefore reducing the number of clinic visits and freeing up clinic capacity for new appointments.
- A free PrEP e-learning programme was developed in order to increase the number of HSE approved PrEP providers within public and private services and therefore increase access to free PrEP medication for those in need. The PrEP e-learning programme was launched on HSELand in December 2024 and 42 individuals have completed the e-learning programme to date.
- The PrEP e-learning programme is one of the competencies that GPs must complete prior to becoming a HSE approved PrEP provider. In 2025 to date, 10 GPs have been newly approved as PrEP providers, eight in Dublin, one in Cork and one in Meath.
- SHP is working to explore digital solutions to address PrEP capacity challenges. Members of the SHP clinical team are part of a research team awarded a Health Research Board grant under the Government of Ireland Evidence for Policy Call. This research will evaluate the impact of the introduction on an online PrEP component to PrEP care on efficiency, capacity, value for money, feasibility and acceptability. Recruitment will commence as soon as research ethics committee approval is granted.

The 2023 PrEP report has been published here:

<https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-professionals/research/research-reports/prep-monitoring-report-2023-final-feb2025.pdf>

Yours Sincerely,

Orla McGowan

Programme Lead

Sexual Health Programme, HSE Health and Wellbeing