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22nd September, 2025

Deputy O'Flynn
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

Re: 45614/25

To ask the Minister for Health whether she considers it appropriate that HSE training instructs staff that persistent refusal to use new or neo-pronouns requires re-education, and if she will clarify whether disciplinary processes are envisaged for staff who, on conscientious or scientific grounds, believe there are two biological sexes.

Re: 45618/25

To ask the Minister for Health whether she has considered the risk of patient confusion or diminished trust in clinical settings arising from HSE staff introducing themselves with pronouns, and whether an impact assessment has been conducted to evaluate effects on patient care.

Dear Deputy O'Flynn

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

As a public sector organisation, the HSE has a range of legal duties relating to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. All public sector bodies have a legal obligation to prevent discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights.

Furthermore, under the National LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy II Action Plan 2025-2026, the HSE is responsible to ensure that "*Ongoing training for health professionals is provided to address the specific needs of LGBTIQ+ people*" (action 14 deliverable).

This action is framed under the following strategic outcomes and objectives:

- Strategic Outcome: LGBTIQ+ people enjoy health and wellbeing outcomes similar to that of the general population and their specific needs are addressed within the health system.
Strategic Objective: LGBTIQ+ people's health and wellbeing is improved through improved investment in and access to services

The aim of the HSE Pronoun Awareness Training is to promote more inclusive healthcare practices for the LGBTIQ+ community. Content for The HSE Pronoun Awareness Training module was developed by



HSE in partnership with community and voluntary sector and people with lived experience/members of the LGBTIQ+ community.

In this module the use of neo-pronouns is explored. It is mentioned that, in instances where people accessing healthcare chose to use a neo-pronoun to self-identify, it is suggested that the professional mirrors that language, to foster a respectful and accepting space. One of a range of ways that the health service can help to reduce health inequalities is by using inclusive language.

It is also suggested that healthcare staff can share their own pronouns if they chose to, when they are introducing themselves. The HSE National Guideline on Visual Identity and Naming state that HSE staff can include preferred pronouns in their email signature if they like.

Because this is not mandatory for staff, there is no HSE policy in relation to disciplinary processes for staff in these cases.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Doyle
National Lead, Social Inclusion