



Clár Sláinte Náisiúnta do Mhná & do Naíonáin
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, An Foirgneamh
Brunel, An Ceantar Theas, Baile Átha Cliath D08 X01F
T: 076 695 9991

National Women and Infants Health Programme
Health Service Executive, The Brunel Building, Heuston
South Quarter, Dublin D08 X01F
T: 076 695 9991

08/10/2025

Deputy Donnelly
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 50642/25: To ask the Minister for Health the number of locations and practitioners that publicly provide frenotomy services for babies with tongue tie issues. -Paul Donnelly

Dear Deputy Donnelly,

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.

All infants in Ireland have a clinical examination performed in the first 48 hours following birth including those infants born at home. The newborn clinical examination is carried out in a systematic and standardised way including an examination of the mouth. Ankyloglossia (Tongue tie) should be diagnosed using an internationally recognised and validated score that incorporates both appearance and function of the tongue. Ankyloglossia, in the absence of breastfeeding difficulties or symptoms, does not need any intervention as it is estimated that the majority of infants with Ankyloglossia will breastfeed successfully.

Lactation support is the primary treatment for tongue-tie. Frenotomy is an important procedure to alleviate nipple pain and assist in the continuation of breastfeeding, where lactation support alone has not resolved pain or latch issues. Frenotomy in infancy is a treatment that may be performed with the informed consent of the parents. For the purpose of improving breastfeeding. An infant with feeding issues should be fully examined by an appropriately trained health care professional in order to rule out an underlying medical condition as a cause.

Earlier this year, a consensus statement on “The Assessment and Management of Ankyloglossia (Tongue Tie) in Newborns and Early Infancy” was published by a multidisciplinary working group established by the Faculty of Paediatrics, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Its purpose is to provide information and guidance for Irish healthcare professionals who receive referrals to assess and treat breastfed infants with tongue-tie. The document highlights the importance of pre-operative and post-operative lactation care in managing tongue-tie. The document is accessible online at:
https://www.rcpi.ie/Portals/0/Document%20Repository/News/Faculty%20of%20Paediatrics_Assessment%20of%20Tongue%20Tie%20in%20Newborns%20and%20Infants_2025.pdf?ver=Zfam17R6oj0F9hGDOnD1dQ%3D%3D

Frenotomy procedures are performed by appropriately trained healthcare professionals including, ENT surgeons, paediatricians, oral surgeons, general practitioners and dentists, as well as by a small number of specialist nurses and midwives who have undertaken additional training and act under the supervision of a consultant or physician.

Assessment and management of frenotomy services are provided in some HSE services, including:

- National Maternity Hospital
- The Coombe Hospital
- MRH Portlaoise
- University Maternity Hospital Limerick
- Cork University Maternity Hospital
- University Hospital Waterford
- University Hospital Kerry
- University Hospital Galway
- Letterkenny University Hospital
- Mayo University Hospital
- Sligo University Hospital

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Davinia O'Donnell,

General Manager,

National Women and Infants Health Programme