



6th October, 2020

Deputy Sorca Clarke, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

Re: PQ 25627/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons working in the addiction services that have requested naloxone training; and the number working in the addiction services that have received naloxone training.

PQ 25628/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons working in the emergency services that have requested naloxone training; and the number working in the emergency services that have received naloxone training.

PQ 25630/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons working in homeless services that have requested naloxone training; and the number of working in homeless services that have received naloxone training.

PQ 25631/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of general practitioners that have requested naloxone training; and the number of general practitioners that have received naloxone training.

PQ 25632/20

To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons living with a person in addiction that have requested naloxone training; and the number of persons living with a person in addiction that have received naloxone training.

Dear Deputy Clarke,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:



I propose to answer all the questions with one response as there is considerable overlap in relation to the information and often training is provided to services in combination (e.g. homeless services and addiction services staff often come together for training).

Since 2015 when the HSE launched the Naloxone Demonstration Project the HSE has been expanding the availability of this substance in line with action 2.2.30 of the National Drugs and Alcohol strategy. Please find below a link to the Evaluation report of the Naloxone Demonstration Project published in 2016

<http://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/26037/1/Naloxonedemoproject.pdf>

Naloxone is a prescription only medication that requires training to administer. Initially available as an injectable product only in Ireland, since 31st August 2018 it has also been available as an intranasal preparation. Since the introduction in Ireland in 2018, the HSE has made intranasal naloxone available to services along with the injectable product. The HSE National Social Inclusion office coordinates the distribution and supply of both naloxone products to services and funded agencies.

Training for staff, peers and family members in the administration of the substance is also organised by the National Social inclusion office. Training has taken place in all CHO areas and this year further training was organised for the Irish Prison Service.

Staff working as General Practitioners and Emergency services staff do not require the training provided by the National Social Inclusion office as they receive training provided in undergraduate courses for GPs and Emergency responder courses provided by the National Ambulance Service and Dublin Fire Brigade.

The National Social Inclusion office provides training for service users, peers, family members and staff working in relevant services via a training programme accredited by the Irish Institute of Pharmacists and overseen by a Quality Assurance Group in the HSE. In 2020, due to the advent of the Covid 19 pandemic, training had to be refined in order to facilitate virtual training. This was less than ideal as an important element of training is the practical application of an intramuscular injection or intranasal administration of the naloxone.

For the information of the deputy, in 2020 745 additional individuals with opioid dependence have been inducted onto Opioid Substitution Treatment (methadone or buprenorphine) and all of these service users have received naloxone and training in the administration of naloxone.

In relation to the other groups identified by the deputy, I should point out that we do not record data on people requesting training but in 2020 we have trained an additional 180 staff members working in a variety of services. These include Homeless services, Addiction Services, Traveller Primary Health care workers, Task Force service workers and Prison staff including nurses.

In relation to people living with a person with Addiction, this has been difficult to progress in 2020 due to Covid 19 restrictions but I can confirm that 50 individuals in this category received training in 2019 from the National Family Support Network.

The Quality Assurance Group continues to work on training initiatives and this group comprises HSE, Community and Voluntary agencies, the National Family Support Network and UISCE (service user representative group) and will continue to oversee the roll out of this life saving medication

In May of 2020, as a result of requests from services and the HSE, the National Council of Pharmacoeconomics (NCPE) recommended that intranasal naloxone be considered for reimbursement

by the PCRS. This will result in intranasal naloxone being available free of charge for medical card holders.

In summary, there has been substantial progress in the supply and distribution of naloxone by the HSE Social Inclusion Office and we are committed to continuing the expansion of this life saving medication.

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

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Eamon Keenan,
National Clinical Lead – Addiction Services