



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

National Social Inclusion Office
Primary Care Division
Health Service Executive
Mill Lane
Palmerstown
Dublin 20
01 620 1747
Fax 01 620 1626

15th June 2015

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 20224/15

* To ask the Minister for Health his plans to address the fact that there are not sufficient general practitioners outside the Dublin area who have Level 1/2 training to dispense Methadone; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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:

Currently there are 1,358 Level 1 GP's (Dublin: 655, rest of the country: 703) and 75 level 2 GP's (Dublin: 58, rest of the country: 17) trained.

As of the end of April 2015, of the 346 GP's prescribing methadone 275 are Level 1's (Dublin: 170, rest of the country: 175) and 71 Level 2's (Dublin: 61, rest of the country: 10).

In addition, 3 Level 2's to cover outside of Dublin are in the final stages of accreditation.

In conjunction with the ICGP the HSE are working to increase engagement of all GPs who are trained at Level 1 and Level 2 throughout the country. An exercise is underway with the ICGP Faculties to ensure that all GPs are updated on substance misuse issues and in particular, improving access in primary care for patients on methadone. Ideally all stable methadone patients who are registered with a Level 1 GP should be transferred to that GP where appropriate. The HSE is currently finalising a process so that existing caps can be raised to the following limits:

- * From 15 to 25 patients for Level 1 GPs and
- * From 35 to 50 patients for Level 2 GPs.

This process will create further treatment capacity and will free up treatment places in addiction centres

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Doyle', written in a cursive style.

Joseph Doyle
National Planning Specialist
Social Inclusion