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Deputy Mairéad Farrell  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2  
5<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**PQ ref: 20695/21**

**Question:** To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown of funding provided to regional sexual healthcare centres; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Deputy Farrell,

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

Public STI services are not funded from a single budget in the health system; some receive funding from primary care, some from public health and some from the acute hospitals division. This is described in a mapping report published by the Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) in 2018, [Sexual Health Services in Ireland: A Survey of STI and Contraception Services](#).

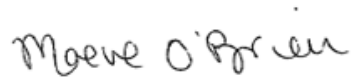
Centralised funding for public STI services was secured for the first time by the HSE SHCPP in 2019 with the specific purpose to implement the national HIV pre-exposure (PrEP) programme; funding for staff resources to roll-out this programme in addition to existing services was allocated to public STI services. The resource requirements for each service were informed by engagement with public STI services and research conducted by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) published in 2019 [Assessing the Preparedness of Public STI Clinics for HIV-PrEP Implementation](#).

Data from the mapping of Sexual Health Services in Ireland highlights that there are inequities in service provision nationally and the report identifies areas where action is required to improve access, availability and provision of sexual health services. These actions have been incorporated into the work of the HSE SHCPP in line with the objectives of the [National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020](#).

One of these actions seeking to address these inequities is the current piloting of an online (home) STI testing service in Dublin, Cork and Kerry. The pilot, being undertaken by online provider SH:24, will assess the feasibility, acceptability and cost-effectiveness of an online STI testing service integrated with public STI clinics in Ireland. The service

delivery period will be complete in May 2021 and will be followed by an evaluation to inform decision-making in relation to future service provision. The pilot project is funded through the Government of Ireland's Sláintecare Integration Fund 2019 under Grant Agreement Number ID57 and co-funded by the HSE SHCPP. For more information, please visit [www.sexualwellbeing.ie](http://www.sexualwellbeing.ie).

Yours Sincerely



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**Maeve O'Brien**

Interim Programme Lead

Sexual Health & Crisis Pregnancy Programme