



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta  
Clár Cúraim Pobail Feabhsaithe &  
Conarthaí Príomhchúraim  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte

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Deputy Colm Burke  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Dublin 2.

27<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

**PQ 48596/23 - To ask the Minister for Health if he will ringfence dedicated funding for the purposes of recruiting additional respiratory physiologists; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Burke,

I refer to your parliamentary question, which was passed to the HSE for response.

In line with Sláintecare, the Enhanced Community Care Programme (ECC) objective is to deliver increased levels of health care with service delivery reoriented towards general practice, primary care and community-based services. The focus is on implementing an end-to-end care pathway that will care for people at home and over time prevent referrals and admissions to acute hospitals where it is safe and appropriate to do so, and enable a “home first” approach. The ECC Programme was allocated €240m for the establishment of 96 Community Healthcare Networks, 30 Community Specialist Teams for Older people, 30 Community Specialist Teams for Chronic Disease, national coverage for Community Intervention Teams and the development of a volunteer-type model in collaboration with Alone.

In line with the Enhanced Community Care Programme, the Winter Plan 2020/21 and the National Framework for the Integrated Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease, direct GP access to chronic disease diagnostic services within the community are required to support the provision of person-centred care as close to home as possible. Improved access to chronic disease diagnostic services in the community will allow for timely, accurate diagnosis, early intervention and proactive management of chronic conditions and thus, improved outcomes and hospital avoidance.

In response to your question regarding the ring fencing of funding to recruit additional Respiratory Physiologists the table below outlines the additional 48 WTE Senior Cardiac Physiologists that have been allocated and with ring fenced funding in each CHO, aligned to the acute hospital group.

The table below outlines the allocation of Respiratory Physiologists aligned to each Hospital to support the CD –CST and to deliver direct GP access to Respiratory diagnostics.



CHO	Areas	Senior Respiratory Physiologists
CHO 1	Letterkenny Cavan Sligo	1 WTE 1.5 WTE 1.5 WTE
CHO 2	Galway Portiuncula Mayo	1.5 WTE 1.5 WTE 1.5 WTE
CHO 3	Limerick Ennis	1.5 WTE 2 WTE
CHO 4	CUH and aligned hospitals UHK	5.5 WTE 1.5 WTE
CHO 5	Kilkenny South Tipp Waterford University Hospital Wexford University Hospital	1.5 WTE 1 WTE 1 WTE 1.5 WTE
CHO 6	St Vincent's hospital	4 WTE
CHO 7	St. James' Hospital Tallaght Naas/Kildare	3.5 WTE 2 WTE 2 WTE
CHO 8	Mullingar Portlaoise OLOL	1.5 WTE 1.5 WTE 3 WTE
CHO 9	Mater Beaumont Connolly	2.5 WTE 2.5 WTE 1.5 WTE

Some of these services in the table will commence directly in the Community specialist teams for chronic disease and others will commence in the aligned hospitals and will transition to the community hub. Resources have been allocated to support the service developments.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

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**Geraldine Crowley,**  
**Assistant National Director,**



**Enhanced Community Care Programme &  
Primary Care Contract**