



2 May 2024

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Niall Collins

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Re: To ask the Minister for Health if his Department or any agency of his Department has assessed any potential health impacts to people who reside near windfarms/wind turbines including the impacts of any noise and flicker coming from wind turbines; if the Department has or compiles any data in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Niall Collins

Dear Deputy Collins

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

Our colleagues within Health Protection, Environment and Health have researched this matter and found there is currently no robust evidence in the international scientific literature to show that wind turbines negatively affect people's physical health once they are appropriately installed in accordance with guidelines.

In 2017, the Public Health Medicine Environment and Health Group produced a position paper on wind turbines which summarised as follows:

- Carbon based energy systems are driving climate change.
- Wind energy is a core element of Ireland's response to the EU Climate and Energy Policy Framework for 2020 to 2030.
- The international surge in wind farm development in recent years has led to concerns regarding potential public health impacts.
- Published scientific evidence is inconsistent and does not support adverse effects of wind turbines on health.
- However, adequate setback distances and meaningful engagement with local communities are recommended in order to address public concern.

For more information see:

<https://www.lenus.ie/bitstream/handle/10147/621467/HSE+PHMEHG+Wind+Final+PP+Feb+2017.pdf;jsessionid=D1544375876FCB81236B23CF4C667A24?sequence=3>

More recent literature since 2017 and the same findings apply fairly consistently. It is important that evidence informed guidance on the development of windfarms is followed in order to reduce any possibility of adverse health effects. For instance, environmental noise could potentially be a health issue, hence the World Health Organization advice is to keep wind turbine noise <45dB Lden (L den is an average sound pressure level over all days, evenings and nights in a year). For more information See: https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/who-compendium-on-health-and-environment/who_compendium_noise_01042022.pdf?sfvrsn=bc371498_3



If you require any further information or clarification, please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

John Cuddihy.

Dr John Cuddihy

National Director of Public Health

MCRN: 16227