



27th February, 2024

Deputy Niamh Smyth, TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 6132/24

To ask the Minister for Health what supports are being put in place nationally, and particularly in counties Cavan and Monaghan, to help people with a condition (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Smyth,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Clinical Programme (NCP) for Surgery on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

The condition referred to in the attached documents is Tinnitus, which is the medical term for the sensation of hearing noise in the ears or head that does not have an external source.

Tinnitus is rarely a sign of a serious underlying condition. For some people, it may come and go and only be a minor irritation. However, for some people, it can have a significant and distressing impact on everyday life.

In many cases, Tinnitus will get better gradually over time, either by disappearing or by the body getting used to it. However, it is recommended to seek medical advice to see if an underlying cause can be found and treated and to help find ways to cope.

The current pathway for patients with Tinnitus in Ireland is to see their GP for initial assessment and, if there are any red flag areas of concern, such as rapid hearing loss or discharge from the ear, for example, then these patients should be referred to an ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat) Consultant.

For less complex presentations, an integrated audiology service is key for patient access and treatment.

Current sites that provide ENT / Audiology services nationally include:

1. Sligo University Hospital
2. Letterkenny University Hospital
3. University Hospital Galway
4. University Hospital Limerick
5. University Hospital Kerry
6. South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital, Cork
7. University Hospital Waterford
8. Midlands Regional Hospital, Tullamore
9. Monaghan Hospital
10. Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda
11. Beaumont Hospital, Dublin
12. Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin
13. Tallaght University Hospital
14. St James Hospital, Dublin
15. St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin
16. Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin.



With regard to counties Cavan and Monaghan in particular, currently, there is an ENT Clinic that operates in Monaghan. There is no ENT Clinic in Cavan Hospital.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Anne Horgan
General Manager

References:

HSE's Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery: A Model of Care for Ireland (2019)
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/cspd/ncps/surgery/moc/>

