



HSE Acute Operations
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St John's Road West,
Kilmainham,
D08NN9V

29th April 2024

Minister Colm Burke,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 9456/24

To ask the Minister for Health the number of obesity clinics operational in the health service; and the number of consultants specialising in this area. -Colm Burke

Dear Minister Burke,

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.

The Overweight and Obesity pathway was approved by the HSE Chief Clinical Officer Clinical Forum in 2022. It is in line with the HSE Model of Care for the Management of Overweight and Obesity (2021) and sets out the services required for individuals to manage overweight and obesity. In 2024, obesity care was identified as a focus area within the Waiting List Action Plan (WLAP), building on progress made in 2023 access to obesity care.

Obesity is a chronic, relapsing disease in which excess body weight impairs an individuals' health. Severe and complex obesity requires specialist assessment and treatment. The Obesity Model of Care (2021) recommends that adults with severe and complex obesity access level 3 medical management services prior to accessing level 4 services for bariatric surgery. Historically, Ireland has limited service provision for obesity resulting in growing waiting lists and longer waiting times to access both level 3 and level 4 clinics. In 2023, specialist services for obesity received dedicated funding for the first time as part of WLAP to uplift staffing and increase service activity. Obesity clinics are made up of a consultant and a multidisciplinary team which assess and treat individuals with obesity over 6-12 months before referring on to bariatric surgery or back to their GP.



Table 1 sets out the number of level 3 and level 4 obesity clinics operational in the health service; and the number of consultants specialising in this area.

Clinic Site	Level of Care	Number of Consultants
St Columcille's Hospital	Level 3 –medical management	1 WTE Consultant Endocrinologist
St Vincent's University Hospital	Level 4- bariatric surgery	1 WTE Consultant Bariatric Surgeon
Galway University Hospital	Level 3 –medical management	1 WTE Consultant Endocrinologist
Galway University Hospital	Level 4- bariatric surgery	0.4 WTE Consultant Bariatric Surgeon
Mallow General Hospital	Level 3 –medical management	1 WTE Consultant Endocrinologist
Children's Health Ireland	Level 3-Children and Young People medical management	1 WTE Consultant General Paediatrician

*WTE = Whole time equivalent

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,

Karen Gaynor
Programme Manager Obesity National Clinical Programme