



12<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**RE: PQ 35925/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health the steps being taken to ensure that all those that require dialysis can get it without delay; the steps being taken to ensure as many of these as possible are provided with the option of either home dialysis or outpatient dialysis as appropriate; the main source of logjams in the system; and if he will make a statement on the matter**

Dear Deputy Ó Cuív,

The Health Service Executive 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 Renal Office (NRO) on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

The National Renal Office (NRO), in conjunction with our renal units, continue to work on the development of patient-centred renal services. The NRO tracks the prevalence by location and the mode of treatment for patients receiving kidney replacement therapy – dialysis or transplantation - in Ireland.

Over the past 20 years, the demand for kidney replacement therapy for adults has more than doubled, particularly in respect to provision of in-centre haemodialysis and kidney transplantation. In 2023, the NRO data recorded that the number of patients requiring treatment by dialysis or kidney transplantation increased to 5,257 (5,190 adults and 67 children).

There was increased demand for dialysis treatment and reduced kidney transplantation due to the Covid pandemic. Between 1/1/20 and 1/1/24, the number of patients treated by dialysis increased by 306 in total. This requires the HSE to provide in excess of 50,000 additional patient treatments in 2024 compared to 2020.

The HSE has invested in additional dialysis capacity, but demand has been greater than anticipated in some renal units. This has led to these units having to operate above capacity, outside of standard treatment times, in order to provide care for patients.

In-centre haemodialysis to adults is provided in units spread geographically across the country, through 13 HSE Public Hospital Parent Renal Units, with 2 HSE Public Hospital Satellite Dialysis Units and 9 HSE Contracted Satellite Units.

Home Dialysis Therapy is provided by eight Adult HSE Hospitals and both Paediatric Centres. Haemodialysis for children is provided by the National Paediatric Dialysis Centre in Temple St, University Hospital and Children's Health Ireland.

HSE has provided over 440,000 dialysis treatments, 100,000 of which were home dialysis. These 100,000 home dialysis therapy treatments avoided over 45,000 hospital visits per year.

The HSE has developed and funded a modernised care pathway for home dialysis, to increase access to home dialysis therapies and provide patients with pre-dialysis education and enhanced community support through home visits. This has extended home therapy education to all 24 hospital units.

Significant and sustained increase in the demand for kidney dialysis services and kidney transplants is partly driven by a growing and ageing national population, but also improvements in healthcare that has extended the lifespan of patients with chronic diseases.

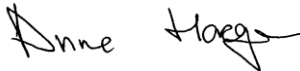
Improved survival rates of patients on dialysis is a major contributing factor to the increase in the number of patents on dialysis. Many of these patients are not medically suitable for kidney transplantation.

There is a requirement for infrastructural support for dialysis services to address the increased demands, in addition to resources such as dialysis-trained nurses to carry out dialysis treatments, health and social care professionals (e.g. dieticians and social workers) to support dialysis patients and medical staff for clinical governance.

Support for expanding home dialysis services, to include an assisted home peritoneal dialysis programme, would reduce the requirement for capital investment and building of new dialysis units.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Horgan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**