

CervicalCheck Steering Committee
Weekly report to the Minister
28 June 2018

1. Overview

The Steering Committee met on Thursday 28, June. The meeting was co-chaired by the CMO, Dr Tony Holohan, and Ms Tracey Conroy, Assistant Secretary. Members include patient representatives, the Irish Cancer Society, and clinicians and senior management from the Department of Health and the HSE.

2. Update on support package and *ex gratia* payment

Since the decision to establish the support package on 11th May, a team of specially designated Liaison Officers has been appointed to work with individuals and put in place the required supports. Most recent data shows that Liaison Officers have contacted 205 individuals and held 157 face-to-face meetings to discuss their needs.

It is important to note that every individual's circumstances will be unique to them and thus the HSE has taken care to respect the wishes of the women and their families regarding the timing of contacts and subsequent meetings. Where meetings have not yet been held, this reflects the wishes of the individuals concerned either to meet at a future date that suits them or, in some instances not to take up the offer of support. With Liaison Officers engagement with women now established, it is not expected that numbers of meetings held will change significantly from week to week.

Further consideration is to be given to how best to ensure that affected women and families across the country are receiving clear and consistent information and support.

***Ex gratia* payment as recommended by Dr Scally**

Arrangements to make the ex-gratia payment of €2,000 to each of the women affected or, where a woman has died, to their next-of-kin are being coordinated through the Liaison Officers. As of 28 June, 142 payments had been made and a further 30 payments are scheduled. Remaining payments will be completed once individuals' banking details have been received.

Delivery of supports

- At close of business on 28 June, the HSE had issued 404 new medical cards to women and family members or next-of-kin where the woman has, sadly, died. In addition, amendments have been made to the terms of existing medical cards or G.P visit cards in 87 cases to recategorise these as medical cards under the terms of the CervicalCheck support package.
- Alongside the provision of medical cards, primary care supports, including counselling, have been made available to those requesting them. This is very much a client-driven process and requests for supports will differ from individual to individual.
- A range of other health supports is being provided including in response to requests for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dental, ophthalmic and nursing services among others. The numbers requesting these supports is relatively small but in all cases appointments have been given where requested (again some individuals have indicated a wish to wait before commencing with treatment).
- The Government decision of 11 May provided that where women had been prescribed a medicine by their treating clinician, any out-of-pocket costs would be met. This includes

medicines not officially approved for reimbursement and any other non-standard therapies, once prescribed for the patient by their doctor.

- Arrangements are in place to reimburse a range of costs that the women and their families incur from 11 May including travel costs, childcare costs and medical appointment costs among others. These will be reimbursed upon receipt of claims from individuals.

Retrospective costs

- The Department is working with the HSE to gather information on the type and scale of costs that individuals have incurred, to enable a decision to be made on the most appropriate means of supporting people in this regard.

4. Release of records

A team has been put in place in CervicalCheck to deal with requests for records. The HSE has confirmed these are being processed within the timeframes for record access requests. This is in line with the Minister's expressed expectation that all patient information, including documents, files and audits related to patients, will be made available to patients or their representatives without delay, and that the provision of information will be streamlined to the fullest extent possible to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

- 114 legal requests have been received to date and 58 have been processed; 16 new legal requests were received in the past week
- 152 data access requests have been received and 119 have been responded to, to date

5. International Clinical Expert Panel Review

The International Clinical Expert Panel Review is being carried out under the auspices of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) with expertise also sourced through the British Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology. The scope of the review includes all cases of invasive cervical cancer in Ireland since CervicalCheck was established, to include the 1,482 cases notified to CervicalCheck since then and a further 1,630 cases registered by the National Cancer Registry of Ireland which had not been notified to CervicalCheck. Women who developed cancer and who were screened by CervicalCheck will be identified and their screening histories will be examined.

There is ongoing engagement between the Department of Health and RCOG on the details and complexities of the review. Terms of reference and the scope of the review have been agreed. Required resources are currently being scoped, identified and put in place by both the HSE and RCOG and a number of meetings are planned for the coming week to drive further progress.

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