



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Joint Committee on Health

Meeting

Wednesday 13th March 2019

Opening Statement by Dr Jerome Coffey

Director

Cancer Control Programme

Good Morning Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for the invitation to attend the committee meeting. I am joined by my colleague Dr Ana Terres, Head of Research and Evidence.

We have submitted two presentations to the Committee. So in this brief opening statement we would like to focus on the development of cancer services in Ireland over the term of the National Cancer Strategy to 2026 and the roles of the National Cancer Control Programme and the HSE's Research and Evidence function in this.

In May of 2015 the steering group and patient forum charged with developing the third National Cancer Strategy were established. Working on this it became clear how much had changed in cancer services since publication of the last strategy in 2006. The programmatic approach and the national scale of organisation and investment have been commended by an international external evaluation panel and are in alignment with EU cancer control principles.

Recommendations in the Strategy are also consistent with the following areas in the Sláintecare Report, published by the Committee on the Future of Healthcare in May 2017:

- Citizen engagement and empowerment
- Integration of care and meeting population needs
- Service design care pathways
- Infrastructure
- eHealth
- Quality of care

As is clear in the implementation report for 2018 published by the Department last month there has been considerable progress to date. I am particularly pleased that clinical leaders have been appointed in cancer nursing, psycho-oncology and for children and adolescents / young adults (CAYA) with cancer.

In the area of cancer research there is broad agreement that permanent funding for core research staff is essential, within a HSE framework of support and research governance, which will enable the growth of clinical research and facilitate collaboration with both industry and the academic sector.

Developing the Strategy, and the initial phase of its implementation, is the result of collaboration between the relevant elements of the healthcare system with the registered charities, greatly enhanced by increasing levels of public and patient involvement.

In closing we would like to reiterate the importance of the third National Cancer Strategy as an appropriately ambitious plan for the further development of cancer prevention and patient care and look forward to your on-going support with it.

This concludes my opening statement and together we are happy to take any questions you may have.

Thank you.