Deputy Pearse Doherty TD,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

23rd December 2019

"To ask the Minister for Health if a general practitioner can retrospectively sign a referral letter for a person (details supplied) in County Donegal wishing to avail of reimbursement for a procedure provided via the cross border directive; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Mr Kee’s GP advised to apply for a cataract procedure through the Cross Border Directive rather than the applicant being put on a waiting list given Mr Kee’s age however, due to an error by the GP who did not sign the referral letter, Mr Kee’s application was subsequently rendered invalid consequently leaving Mr Kee ineligible for a reimbursement.

Details Supplied:  
Name: William Kee, Rusky, Convoy, Co. Donegal

Dear Deputy Doherty,

Thank you for your PQ above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

To avail of the HSE CBD, a patient must have a valid path of referral for the healthcare which they are choosing to avail of abroad. A valid path of referral is either:

- a signed GP/public consultant referral to a named consultant/physician in a named hospital/clinic abroad, which must be issued in advance of the healthcare abroad being availed of;
  or
- Confirmation that the patient is on a public hospital waiting list in Ireland for the healthcare they are choosing to avail of abroad.

Mr Kee submitted his claim for reimbursement, which included a copy of an unsigned GP letter. The CBD office has made every possible effort to assist Mr. Kee:

- Liaised with Kingsbridge Private Hospital, Belfast to determine if they had a record of a signed GP referral letter.
- Liaised with Mr Kee to determine if he was on a waiting list in Ireland.
• Liaised with Mr Kee's General Practitioner to obtain copy of any earlier referral to the public system in Ireland.

Despite all efforts, a valid path of referral is not available for Mr Kee accessing his healthcare abroad.

Unfortunately, a signed letter issued in retrospect cannot be used as a valid path of referral.

As outlined in the decision letter issued, Mr Kee has the ability to appeal the decision to decline his application.

If you have any queries, or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0872668759 or via catherine_donohoe@hse.ie.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Catherine Donohoe
A/Assistant National Director