



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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10<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan, TD  
Dáil Eireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 2422/15**

\* To ask the Minister for Health if there is a contract in place for chemists who are involved in the dispensing of methadone; if the Irish College of General Practitioners still accredit Level 2 training for methadone prescribing; if doctors can work in more than one location; and if there is a restriction on the number of patients seen by Level 1 and Level 2 doctors.

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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:

There is no specific contract for Methadone. However, it is considered that the terms and conditions outlined in the Community Pharmacy Contractor Agreement are sufficient to ensure the appropriate dispensing of Methadone in the community.

Clause 4 (3) states that ' The Pharmacy Contractor shall ensure that the conduct of his / her practice, insofar as the dispensing and compounding of medicines are concerned, is in conformity with the standards of best pharmaceutical practice as determined by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland from time to time.'

Furthermore, there is an onus placed on the pharmacist under Clause 9 of the Community Pharmacy Contractor Agreement that 'prior to the dispensing of each prescription, and prior to the supply of the medicine, ensure that a pharmacist reviews the medicine therapy of the individual for whom the prescription is issued.

The Irish College of General Practitioners accredit Level 2 Training for Methadone prescribing – see <http://www.icgp.ie/go/courses/courses/CERTSUBMISUSE> for more information.

Doctors can work in more than one location.

There is a commitment in the HSE's 2015 Primary Care operational plan to increase the maximum number of Opioid Substitution Treatment patients from 15 to 25 for level 1 prescribers, and in exceptional circumstances, from 35 to 50 for level 2 prescribers by the end of Quarter 1 2015.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a prominent "D".

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Joseph Doyle,  
National Planning Specialist