



Deputy Thomas Pringle,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

By email to Thomas.pringle@oireachtas.ie

7th March 2023

Ref: PQ 8226/23

To ask the Minister for Health the amount spent by the HSE to tackle tobacco use in 2021 and 2022; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Pringle,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above referenced Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health. The question concerned was referred to Strategy and Research, HSE, for review and direct response as the work of the Tobacco Free Ireland Programme (TFIP) is part of that function.

The TFIP is the HSE vehicle through which the actions identified for the HSE in the Department of Health *Tobacco Free Ireland* Strategy (2013) are implemented across the health services. The Programme falls under the governance of Strategy and Research in the HSE (in 2017 the TFIP was part of the former Health and Wellbeing Division of the HSE).

Our response to the PQ concerned is set out below.

	2021 Cost €	2022 Cost €
HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme (Pay and Non-Pay) ¹	595,505	711,507
QUIT Mass Media Campaign including TV/VOD, Social Media Advertising ²	1,660,000	2,153,992

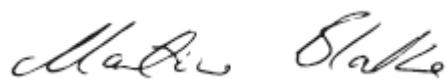
¹ Programme staff, research, design and development of new resources and services, quality assurance, online webinars etc.

² Development of new TV advertisement for 2023 led to increased campaign costs.

Stop Smoking Services (Staff and Associated Costs) ³	1,784,635	3,179,160
National QUIT Line	289,813	377,388
QUITmanager IT System	43,673	33,629
Stop Smoking Medications to Medical Card Holders via Primary Care Reimbursement Scheme ⁴	9,213,130	9,134,767
Environmental Health (Tobacco Control legislation monitoring and National Tobacco Control Office Pay and Non Pay)	1,742,007	1,892,745
Free Stop Smoking Medication (HSE staff and new Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme) ⁵	39,610	276,681
We Can Quit Programme Delivery ⁶	244,620	599,604
TOTAL	€ 15,612,993	€ 18,359,473

The Department of Health-commissioned report *An Assessment of the Economic Cost of Smoking in Ireland*, published in 2016, estimated the annual cost to the health service as **€460 million**, and the total annual costs as **€10.7 billion**. In comparison, costs for providing support to stop smoking are relatively small ⁷ and as per the Department of Health commissioned HIQA report are highly cost effective.

I hope this information is of assistance to you. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.



Martina Blake

National Lead, HSE Tobacco Free Ireland Programme

³ Investment in the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme and Enhanced Community Care Chronic Disease Programme resulted in a significant increase in staffing to deliver stop smoking services in disadvantaged areas where smoking prevalence continues to be high.

⁴ The PCRS costs for stop smoking medication for medical card holders is a demand led service.

⁵ New Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme investment for free medication in 19 Disadvantaged areas and North Inner City Dublin in 2022.

⁶ The We Can Quit Programme is a peer led, 12 week stop smoking group support programme for disadvantaged communities. There is a new Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme investment for courses in 19 designated areas and North Inner City Dublin.

⁷ ICF International, 2016. *An Assessment of the Economic Cost of Smoking in Ireland*. ICF International, London 2016