



News Update

Cystic Fibrosis
Association of Ireland

November 2005

NEWSFLASH

Cystic Fibrosis Named In 2006 Budget Estimates

The Association has been pursuing an active agenda to improve CF services across the country. This started off with the launch of the Pollock Report in February 2005, followed by active lobbying of T.D.'s and Senators culminating in a presentation to members of the Oireachtas in June. We addressed the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health in September and followed this with a meeting with the Tánaiste in October. We have been meeting on a regular basis as part of the Health Services Executive CF Working Group since April and we are pleased to report that we are making progress. In addition to St Vincent's being awarded €300,000 in emergency funding the **HSE was given an additional €4.78 million in the 2006 Budget estimates for CF services.** This allocation of funding is to address additional staffing and services required to improve the quality of services around the country. This does not address capital expenditure for the improvement of infrastructure. We continue to work away on this issue.

When we met with the Minister of Health our objective was to get her commitment to improving CF care in Ireland and to get a specific allocation in the 2006 Budget estimates.

On November 17th 2005 the Tánaiste and Minister of Health issued a Press Release regarding the Health Estimate 2006. In this the Tánaiste is quoted as follows:

"I am very pleased that we are again able to prioritise significant health service developments today in these Estimates. I am determined to ensure that major funding increases translate into visibly better services for patients.

"I am also determined that the pace of health reform across the board matches the pace of funding increases. This is the key to ensuring better services, better value for money and taxpayers' support for further health spending increases.

"2005 has been a year of major transition as we established the Health Service Executive. We are already beginning to see the value of this fundamental reform in terms of accountability and decision-making. The HSE has both management and financial responsibility for our health service operations.

"The HSE and my Department have worked together to efficiently use resources in improving the delivery of health services in this country. The challenge for 2006 is to ensure that the additional funding provided to the Health Sector for next year is once again, effectively and efficiently employed to build on the successes of 2005.

"I look forward to working closely with the HSE to ensure health policy, health funding and health operations are all aligned to the best interest of patients in our country."

The increased funding will be allocated to the following priorities in 2006:

Cystic Fibrosis Services: €4.78 million is being allocated to provide for additional specialist medical, nursing and allied health professional staff at Cystic Fibrosis Units around the country. This will include a particular focus on the national adult tertiary Cystic Fibrosis Centre at St Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin. Cystic Fibrosis services at St Vincent's Hospital are acknowledged as requiring significant investment in order to respond to patient needs and expectations.

In a reply to a question addressed to the Tánaiste and Minister of Health in the Dáil on November 22nd 2005 re the implementation of the Pollock Report by the HSE the Minister made the following positive statement.

"As part of the overall funding for health services in 2006 additional funding of €4.78m is being allocated specifically for the development of cystic fibrosis services.

I wish to see significant improvement next year in the level of services available to persons with cystic fibrosis. The current deficits in this area are widely acknowledged and have been identified most notably in the Pollock Report, and by the Health Services Executive Working Group which is looking at this issue. My Department is advised that the Working Group, which is due to report shortly, will be making specific recommendations in relation to a range of service improvements required for persons with CF, in particular the need to increase the level of clinical, nursing and allied health professional staffing in CF units around the country. **As part of the implementation process I would like to see a particular focus on addressing the identified deficits at the national adult referral centre at St Vincent's Hospital in Dublin."**

This is all very positive news and the Association will continue to push towards the implementation of the above undertakings.

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