

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



Mr Colm Gildernew MLA
Chair, Committee for Health
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Your ref: C2422
Our Ref: CORR/0259/2022
Date: 2nd February 2022

Dear *Colm,*

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Committee for Health on 31 January 2022 in relation to the Legislative Consent Memorandum on virginity testing and hymenoplasty.

Following your request for further information on how the matters of virginity testing and hymenoplasty are dealt with in the Republic of Ireland my officials have sought out their counterparts for input.

Officials in the Republic of Ireland have confirmed that at a recent meeting of the National Women's and Infants Health Programme it was stated that they were not aware that Hymenoplasty is being offered or requested in the Republic of Ireland's public health care system and that there is no national data available for hymenoplasty.

In relation to the UK, the position there and the statement position issued by the Royal College of Gynaecologists, the Institute in Ireland is aware of same. In reviewing this area, National Women's and Infants Health Programme have said that this is not an area of concern which has been brought either to them, or to the Institute, to date.

The officials also confirmed that, at present, they have no legislation directly dealing with the issues of virginity testing or hymenoplasty and it is not currently on their legislative agenda.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robin Swann'.

Robin Swann MLA
Minister for Health



Committee for Health

Wendy Patterson
DALO
Department of Health

By email: Wendy.patterson@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: C24/22

31 January 2022

Dear Wendy,

LCM re Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty

Department of Health officials briefed the Committee on the Department's plans to bring forward a Legislative Consent Memorandum relating to amendments to the Westminster Health and Care Bill which will ban virginity testing and hymenoplasty.

During the briefing, officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information on how this matter is dealt with in the Republic of Ireland, given that a ban in Northern Ireland may result in some people crossing the border for these procedures.

I should be grateful if the information could be provided by 14 February 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Keith McBride
Clerk
Committee for Health

Cc: Suzanne.Howe@health-ni.gov.uk
Andrea.caldwell@health-ni.gov.uk