

Mr Dara Gantly
Senior Executive
Irish Hospital Consultants Association
Heritage House
Dundrum Office Park
Dublin 14

Issued by email to: d.gantly@ihca.ie

3 April 2024

Re: NTPF Radiology Funding for 2024

Dear Mr Gantly,

I refer to your letter sent to Ms Rebecca Maher received on 27 March 2024 in relation to NTPF radiology funding for 2024.

I appreciate it has caused significant concern for your members, but it must be pointed out that it is not the role of the NTPF to manage National Radiology waiting lists. This remains a matter for the HSE.

I would like to put some context on the matters you have raised in your letter and provide you with the facts as they currently stand.

In 2018, the NTPF was requested by the Department of Health to provide support to the health system to ensure greater access to diagnostics in public or private facilities and other Emergency Department (ED) support in December 2018. This was to facilitate patient flow through the hospitals. In 2020, the Department approved broadening the use of Emergency Diagnostic Authorisation Numbers (EDANs) other than for ED support due to Covid-19 pressures (to support access to Diagnostics for hospital outpatient departments). This approach remains in effect.

The NTPF has been allocated funding this year for 70k EDANs. This is an increase of 8% from that approved last year. This will allow for 70,000 patients to receive scans under the EDANs scheme, which in relation to the total volume of diagnostics required by the hospital system annually, is a small volume of work. The Director of Commissioning advised all Scheduled Care Leads in the acute hospitals of this year's availability in January and again in late February. Triaging of patients and clinical decisions on the highest-priority cases in need of radiology scans are matters for individual hospitals.

The demand in 2024 to date has been unprecedented. As a result, a large proportion of this allocation has now been claimed and utilised by public hospitals.

The NTPF, as with all public bodies, must operate an appropriate budgeting system within an agreed funding allocation as approved by our Board and sanctioned by the Department of Health.

Due to the demand in the first three months of the year, a temporary pause has been placed on the routine issuing of EDANs while additional funding is being sought by the HSE. In the intervening period, we are working with HSE Acute Operations to issue more EDANs to hospitals in urgent need. The acute hospitals division in Ms Grace Rothwell's office is best placed to decide how to allocate the remaining EDANs across the new Regions.

I would, however, like to advise that we remain committed to assisting all the hospitals in both scheduled care insourcing and outsourcing initiatives for waiting lists as required.

Yours sincerely,



Fiona Brady
Chief Executive Officer
National Treatment Purchase Fund