

**Children's Health Ireland,
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St. James's Walk,
Rialto,
Dublin 8.
Phone: 0766959180**

10th April 2019

Deputy Louise O'Reilly,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 15840/19

"To ask the Minister for Health the number of children waiting greater than four months for their scoliosis surgery across Children's Health Ireland; and the steps being taken to ensure that the HSE set four month surgery target is met for all children that require scoliosis surgery during 2019 and beyond".

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

I refer to your parliamentary question above to which I have been asked to provide a response.

Children's Health Ireland is working to reduce waiting times for children attending its orthopaedic and scoliosis services with additional investment from the HSE.

Since the allocation of additional HSE funding of €9.3m in 2018 (for both the Children's and Ireland East Hospital Groups), CHI (Children's Health Ireland), formerly CHG (Children's Hospital Group) has implemented prioritised actions from the Scoliosis 10 Point Action Plan ensuring that children, young people and their families are central to the service redesign initiatives. The co-design process of the Action Plan also included engagement with children and young people who experienced scoliosis treatment and services. This was facilitated by the Ombudsman for Children's Office.

The total number of surgeries performed in 2018 was 418 compared with 371 in 2017, an increase of 47. In 2018 there was a 13% increase in the number of spinal surgeries being performed by Children's Health Ireland compared to 2017.

See attached updated on scoliosis related surgeries as at week ending 29th March 2019.

The number of patients on the waiting list for scoliosis related surgeries as of 29th March 2019 (Ex Suspensions*) is 159, of which 83 are waiting for spinal fusion. Overall since the 1st Jan 2018, there has been a decrease of 15 or 15.3% in the waiting list for those waiting for spinal fusion surgeries (Ex suspensions).

The number of children waiting over 4 months for spinal fusion surgeries has also reduced from 35 at the start of 2019 to 31 as of 29th March 2019, which is a reduction of 4 patients or 11.4%.

The number suspensions as at 29th March 2019 is 15 (10 spinal fusions and 5 spinal other) compared to 62 (48 spinal fusion and 14 spinal other) at the start of 2018, which is a reduction of 75.8%.

There has been an additional 60 posts approved, with staff starting at different months in 2018 and 2019. CHI is currently recruiting two additional general orthopaedic consultants which will further reduce waiting times for children for an orthopaedic outpatient appointment.

All patient referrals to the orthopaedic spinal service at CHI are reviewed and clinically prioritised by a consultant. These patients are seen in order of clinical priority. Most patients are seen within 12 months.

An additional 800 OPD appointments were given to patients in CHI at Crumlin in 2018 compared to 2017 which led to a 31% reduction in the overall orthopaedic outpatient waiting list.

While we sincerely regret that any child and their family experience a long waiting time for treatment for scoliosis, the impact of investment and the implementation of the Scoliosis 10 Point Action Plan is now starting to deliver results with a consistent reduction in waiting times being recorded. We will continue to work to reduce waiting times for children and young people attending our orthopaedic and scoliosis services.

* No of patients suspended from the waiting list, as patient is temporarily unavailable or clinically unsuitable for their procedure. This includes all suspensions (hospital or patient initiated)

Please see below, details as at 29th March 2019, which is the most up to date validated data, on the number of spinal fusion patients and other spinal patients waiting less than four months CHI at Crumlin and CHI at Temple Street which includes the number waiting four to eight and more than eight months for treatment

Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin

Spinal Fusion as at 29th March 2019				
	0-4 Months	4-8 Months	8+ Months	Total
Active	22	13	18	53
TCI	0	0	2	2
Suspended	0	2	2	4
Planned	0	0	3	3
Total	22	15	25	62

Other spinal procedures as at 29th March 2019				
	0-4 Months	4-8 Months	8+ Months	Total
Active	18	4	5	27
TCI	3	1	0	4
Suspended	0	0	3	3
Planned	12	1	4	17
Total	33	6	12	51

Children's Health Ireland @ Temple Street

Spinal Fusion as at 29th March 2019				
	0-4 Months	4-8 Months	8+ Months	TOTAL
Active	10	0	0	10
TCI	0	1	0	1
Suspended	0	1	4	5
Planned	0	0	0	0
Total	10	2	4	16

Other Spinal Procedures as at 29/03/2019				
	0-4 Months	4-8 Months	8+ Months	Total
Active	6	1	0	7
TCI	2	3	0	5
Suspended	0	0	2	2
Planned	16	0	0	16
Total	24	4	2	30

Yours sincerely,



Joe Gannon
Chief Operations Officer
Children's Health Ireland



Children's Health Ireland (CHI)

Update on Scoliosis Related Surgeries

Published on 1st April 2019



Dedicated Line for Parents
Both Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin and Temple Street Children's University Hospital have a dedicated line in place for parents only to deal with queries in relation to their child's scoliosis care plan.

CHI at Temple Street
Tel: 01 852 5550
Mon - Fri: 9:00am - 12:00noon

CHI at Crumlin
Tel: 01 409 6577
Mon - Fri: 9:00am - 12:00noon

Total Surgeries (including single and multiple stages) performed as of 29th March 2019

Week Ending 15/03/2019	CHI at Crumlin	CHI at Temple Street	Cappagh Hospital	Total
Number of Spinal Fusion YTD	28	6	7	41
Number of Other Spinal Procedures YTD	32	17	4	53
Total	60	23	10	94

Total number of patients on waiting lists clinically deemed as requiring surgery as of 29th March 2019

Week Ending 29/03/2019	Number of patients on waiting list waiting for scoliosis related surgeries Includes active, pre-admit and planned procedures (excluding suspensions*)	
	Number waiting	Number waiting
	for Spinal Fusion	for other spinal procedures
CHI at Crumlin	58	48
CHI at Temple Street	11	28
Cappagh Hospital	14	0
Total	83	68

* Suspensions are patients temporarily unavailable due to clinical or family reasons



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