

13th December 2019

Deputy Louise O'Reilly
Dail Eireann

PQ 51949/19 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of assaults recorded against frontline staff including nurses, doctors, social workers, ambulance staff and other health professionals to date in 2019, by hospital, geographic location and profession in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Louise O'Reilly

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

I refer to your Parliamentary Question 51949/19 which was forwarded to the HSE for response.

Background

With regard to the above PQ, please see below the report on HSE Assaults on Staff.

To assist with understanding the report/data more fully, I feel it appropriate to firstly give a brief background to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and to the data in the report. In 2015 the NIMS system was introduced by the SCA. This requires all incidents to be reported through a national centralised system and will ultimately improve the quality of the data. However, the HSE has long been proactive in encouraging staff to report all incidents and this is enshrined in the Corporate Safety Statement, Violence and Aggression policy and Incident Management Framework and Guidance.

An incident can be a harmful Incident (Adverse Event), no harm incident, near miss, dangerous occurrence (reportable circumstance) or complaint.

Please note that the following conditions apply to the data:

- Table 1 shows the data broken down by Hospital Group Location
- Table 2 shows the data broken down by the 'Category of Person'
- All assaults on staff are included
- Assaults include a problem/cause of: physical, verbal or sexual assault on staff in the HSE Hospital Groups (excluding voluntaries), that occurred between 01/01/2019 and 09/12/2019
- The report was run by "Date of Incident", which is the date on which the incident occurred and is between 01/01/2019 and 09/12/2019
- This report is correct as of 10/12/2019
- Create date is as of the 10/12/2019

When considering the figures in the report it should be noted that staff are encouraged to report all "near misses" and incidents – even those that **do not** result in harm. Hence, the number of incident

reports should not be considered as indicative of a level of harm. There may also be multiple reports relating to the same incident.

Table 1: HSE Hospital Group Assaults on Staff 01/01/2019 – 09/12/2019

Count of Record Number	
Location At Level 3	Total
Group 1 - HSE - RCSI Hospitals Group	180
Group 2 - HSE - Dublin Midlands Hospital Group	161
Group 3 - HSE - Ireland East Hospital Group	244
Group 4 - HSE - South/South West Hospital Group	166
Group 5 - HSE - Saolta University Health Care Group	216
Group 6 - HSE - University of Limerick Hospital Group	131
Grand Total	1098

Table 2: HSE Assaults within HSE Hospitals broken down by Category of Person 01/01/2019-09/12/2019

Count of Record Number	
Category of Person, Affected	Total
Allied Health Professional	22
Catering/Housekeeping	13
Medical	30
Nursing	726
Other Staff	307
Grand Total	1098

Comment

Ensuring the safety of employees and service users is a priority concern for the HSE. The HSE is committed to creating a safe environment within which to work or to be treated.

There is an emphasis on training and equipping the workforce effectively with skills on risk identification and the management of violence and aggression. Recently funding was set aside and distributed nationally for the training of internal instructors.

The organisation will continue to place an emphasis on the management of work related aggression and violence in 2020 to support the organisational strategy and policy.

I trust this will answer your query however, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely



Nicholas J Parkinson
Head of National Health and Safety Function