



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

fig an Phríomhoifigigh Airgeadais
Feidhmeannacht na
Seirbhíse Sláinte
Seomra 125, Ospidéal
Dr. Steevens
BÁC 8

Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Health Service Executive
Room 125, Dr Steevens
Hospital
Dublin 8

11th July 2019

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

Re PQ 27231 19: *To ask the Minister for Health the number of hospitals using debt collection agencies to recover emergency department charges; the number of persons that had their emergency department bill transferred to a debt collection agency for collection; the value of these bills; and his views on whether this is an acceptable mechanism of cost recovery -Louise O'Reilly*

PQ 27232 19: *To ask the Minister for Health the number of hospitals using debt collection agencies to recover inpatient charges; the number of persons that had their inpatient bill transferred to a debt collection agency for collection; the value of the bills; and his views on whether this is an acceptable mechanism of cost recovery -Louise O'Reilly*

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. Your PQ above has been referred to me for response.

The HSE seeks to maximise the recovery of income in a socially responsible, ethical, efficient and cost effective way. It should be noted that the collection of monies owed is a continuous, daily and large scale process.

The HSE policy and procedures for debt collection are covered by NFR 25(National Financial Regulations) which is available to view on the HSE website on the link below:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/financial%20regulations/>

Debt collection services are used to follow up on the collection of statutory charges namely the €100 ED charge and the €80 per night Inpatient charge when the invoices are not settled by the patients. HSE is legally obliged to make these statutory charges. The private charges are predominantly settled directly with the insurance companies.

Based on data sourced from the HSE Regional Finance ledgers for the full year 2018, 29 HSE Statutory Acute hospitals used debt collection agencies during the year 2018. Please note the data is for HSE statutory services only. The HSE does not have this information for Voluntary entities.

In relation to the breakdown between emergency department charges and inpatient charges, the number of persons that had their bills transferred to a debt collection agency and the value of those bills, this type of data is not captured centrally and is therefore not available as debt collection continues to be managed at a local level.

The shortcomings in the HSE legacy financial systems are well acknowledged and their replacement by a single standard financial system for the Health Sector is at the core of the Finance Reform programme initiated by the Department of Health.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah.anderson1@hse.ie or tel: 045 882559.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Anderson

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