



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig 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

27th March 2019

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

Re PQ 11848 19: *To ask the Minister for Health the amount spent by the HSE on taxis in each of the years 2011 to 2018, in tabular form; and the reason for using taxis for patient transfer, transfer of paper files between hospitals and so on; and if he will make a statement on the matter.- 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.

HSE vehicles and their staff are prioritised for front line, emergency work and therefore a much more effective service is provided for patients or clients who are not acutely ill through the use of taxis. Taxi services are also used for transport of renal dialysis patients and at times for the transfer of patient charts/files between hospitals. The use of taxis for patient transport represents a more cost effective solution when compared to investment in a fleet of HSE owned vehicles for this purpose. Additional costs relating to this would include the provision of 24/7 staffing, maintenance, fuel, insurance and tax. The use of taxis also allows the HSE flexibility in the face of variable demand.

Please see **Table 1** below which shows the total amounts paid by the HSE for taxi services for the years 2012 to 2018. The data was sourced from the HSE Regional Finance general ledger systems and is for HSE Statutory services only. Should you require this information for the Voluntary organisations, you will need to request directly from those organisations. The HSE does not capture the information requested for the voluntary organisations.

Table 1

HSE Taxi Spend for the years 2012 to 2018							
For HSE Statutory systems only							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	*2018
	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m
HSE Taxi Spend	25.6	24.7	24.2	24.7	26.8	26.3	27.9

Source: HSE Regional Finance Ledgers

*Note: Please note 2018 figures are draft only and are subject to change within the year end audit process

Please note that the 2018 data is draft only and is subject to change within the year end audit process. In view of the fact that there are still currently numerous ledger systems in operation in the HSE some differences in coding may arise. The figures collated may therefore include some other patient transport costs such as minibus and local transport initiatives. It is not possible to identify the level of costs involved as an extensive exercise would be required to perform such an analysis.

I regret to inform you that the data for 2011 is not readily available from our central information systems or from data previously collated. Unfortunately, it is not possible to specifically identify the reason for each taxi service used as this information is not held locally or gathered centrally by the HSE. 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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