



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Rannóg na nGnóthaí Parlaiminteacha  
Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Feidhmiúcháin  
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3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019

Deputy Róisín Shortall  
Dáil Éireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

E: [roisin.shortall@oireachtas.ie](mailto:roisin.shortall@oireachtas.ie)

Re: PQ 40196/19

Question: To ask the Minister for Health if the position in which some HSE staff are refusing to take representations from TDs in respect of homecare services on the grounds of GDPR will be clarified; the specific direction given to staff in this regard; the arrangements for TDs to interact with staff in respect of constituents; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

The HSE has in place a central office (Parliamentary Affairs Division) that receives and coordinates Parliamentary Questions and Representations from elected members. To date this year the central office has processed 6,559 PQs and 4,078 representations. The dedicated email for representations to the central office is [pad@hse.ie](mailto:pad@hse.ie).

Elected representatives can of course and do separately contact or send representations directly to local Community Healthcare Organisations and Hospitals and these are received and processed and responded to by the local management and staff who have arrangements in place for dealing with the representations.

With regard to GDPR, following the publication by the Data Protection Commissioner (DPC) in December 2018 of Guidelines on the processing of personal data by Elected Representatives under Section 40 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA 2018) the HSE Parliamentary Affairs Division issued those guidelines to management and staff involved in receiving and processing PQs and Representations.

Management and staff are made aware of their responsibilities to receive and respond to representations and queries from elected representatives and on how these should be processed in line with the requirements of Data Protection, privacy and confidentiality. They are also made aware that they can contact the central PAD office should they need any guidance or assistance regarding representations from elected representatives.

I am not aware of refusals to accept representations from elected representatives and certainly staff in this office to the best of my knowledge has not refused to accept a representation from any elected representative.

I am sorry to hear if you have experienced such a practice and I would be concerned if it is happening. In that regard if you can advise what location or locations you have encountered a particular issue or issues I would be more than happy to have the matter(s) examined and rectified as necessary. Alternatively if you wish to contact me directly to discuss the matter you can get me at 01 6352531.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ray Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue background.

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Ray Mitchell  
Assistant National Director  
Parliamentary Affairs Division