



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



Chief Operations Officer,  
Saolta University Health Care Group,  
Old Nurses Home,  
University Hospital,  
Newcastle Road.  
Galway.  
Tel: 091 893800

Hildegarde Naughton,  
Dail Eireann,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

25<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**RE: PQ6100/20: To ask the Minister for Health the reason women in the Saolta Hospital Group are being allegedly discriminated against in relation to being allowed a partner attend their c-section birth; if his attention has been drawn to the fact that no partner is allowed into theatre to attend a c-section birth in University Hospital Galway whereas they are in University Hospital Castlebar; his views on whether the practice is acceptable; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Naughton,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question/Public Representation which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic the advice from the National Women & Infants Health Programme was that partners should not attend in theatre at the time of a caesarean section. This advice was followed in many maternity hospitals nationally, including University Hospital Galway. However, this was recently reviewed by the Women & Children's Managed Clinical Academic Network and due to a clearer understanding of the coronavirus, this restriction will be eased. The partner can now attend at caesarean section done under regional anaesthesia, following a health screening questionnaire and he/she will be provided with PPE.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Cosgrove,  
Chief Operations Officer,  
Saolta University Health Care Group