



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

03<sup>rd</sup> December 2020

Deputy Sean Sherlock  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2.

Rannan na nOspideil Ghearmhíochaine  
Aonad 4A – Áras Dargan  
An Ceantar Theas  
An Bothar Mileata  
Cill Mhaighneann  
BÁC 8

Acute Operations  
Health Service Executive  
Unit 4A - The Dargan Building  
Heuston South Quarter  
Military Road  
Kilmainham  
Dublin 8.

***PQ 36468/20 \* To ask the Minister for Health the number of virtual otolaryngology appointments that have been made; and the number that have not been completed since the start of public health restrictions by hospital area.***

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to continue to provide outpatient access for patients there has been significant development in virtual outpatient consultations across acute services. This development has taken considerable investment of effort on the part of hospitals and hospital groups.

The development has been fully supported by Acute Operations and indeed fell under the planned strategy for 2020 in terms of scheduled care activity, however it was not envisaged that it would have developed to the extent that it has done in such a short period of time. The approach has been progressed with engagement with the Clinical Programmes and support from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OoCIO).

Some of the key foundation stones that were required for virtual processes have been established including:

- Publication of a Procedure for the Management of Virtual Outpatient Clinics <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/acutehospitals/patientcare/outpatientservices/procedure-for-the-management-of-virtual-outpatient-clinics.pdf>

- Preparation and publication of a patient information leaflet: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/cancer/patient/leaflets/virtual%20health%20clinic%20%20web.pdf>
- Provision of clear guidance around the use of Telehealth solutions ensuring Data Protection and GDPR compliance needs are understood and met
- Seeking a position from clinical indemnity on the provision of care using a virtual approach: <https://stateclaimsagency.newsweaver.com/icfiles/4/83122/239283/544619/5edf2038e348dfe92c6c617e/risk%20advisory%20notice%20-%20telehealth.pdf>
- Working with the Business Intelligence Unit (BIU) to ensure that virtual activity could be reported nationally in a similar manner to face to face OPD consultations.

The elements above have been achieved in collaboration with the OCIO, National Telehealth Steering Committee, Clinical Programmes, BIU and Acute Strategy from a national perspective and with continuous engagement and collaboration with Hospital Groups through the Scheduled Care leads.

In relation to the question raised on virtual otolaryngology appointments that have been made; and the number that have not been completed since the start of public health restrictions by hospital area, please see the relevant details in the table below:

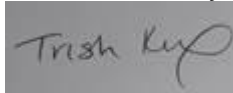
Hospital Group and Hospital	*New Virtual Appts.	*Return Virtual Appts.	*New DNA	*Return DNA
<b>Children's Health Ireland</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>259</b>		<b>18</b>
CHI at Temple St	13	259		18
<b>Dublin Midlands Hospital Group</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>3545</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>343</b>
MRH Tullamore	198	1259		
St. James's Hospital	339	1557	67	205
Tallaght University Hospital	422	729	93	137
Ireland East Hospital Group	219	1778		
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	93	354		
St. Michael's Hospital		352		
St. Vincent's University Hospital	123	1049		
Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital		23		
<b>RCSI Hospitals Group</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>1971</b>		<b>19</b>
Beaumont Hospital	666	1482		
Louth County Hospital	50	20		
Monaghan Hospital	47	235		17
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital	45	234		

<b>Saolta University Health Care Group</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>1798</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>
Galway University Hospitals	250	1233		
Roscommon University Hospital	20	146		
Sligo University Hospital	149	419	8	
<b>South / South West Hospital Group</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>4158</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>302</b>
Cork University Hospital	7	185		25
Mallow General Hospital	269	354	21	10
South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital	555	2172	39	158
UH Kerry	8	85		31
UH Waterford	261	1362	18	78
UL Hospitals Group	218	371	8	13
UH Limerick	218	371	8	13
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3736</b>	<b>13880</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>701</b>

*Data Source: BIU October 2020* \*For reasons of confidentiality figures of between 1 and 5 have been suppressed in the above.

I trust this answers your question.

Yours sincerely,




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**Trish King**  
General Manager, Acute Operations