



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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.

4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Deputy John Lahart  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2.

***PQ 30971/20 \*To ask the Minister for Health the number of staff trained and assigned to perform colonoscopies that were working in public hospitals from 2016 to 2019 and to date in 2020, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.\****

Dear Deputy Lahart,

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.

Gastrointestinal endoscopy is a diagnostic procedure that involves an examination of the inner lining of the gastrointestinal tract. An upper gastrointestinal endoscopy examines the oesophagus, stomach, and the first part of the small intestine (duodenum). The viewing tool, called an endoscope, is passed through the mouth. A colonoscopy examines the inner lining of the large intestine (rectum and colon). This is performed by passing a small flexible tube through the rectum.

Colonoscopy is performed by healthcare professionals who are undergoing or who have undergone specific training. This includes physicians, surgeons and nurses.

The HSE does not retain a national database of all healthcare professionals who perform colonoscopies. However, electronic reporting systems are used to record information about colonoscopies carried out in public (and private) hospitals. Each healthcare professional performing colonoscopy is registered on these systems with a unique user ID. Information from most (but not all) public hospitals is in turn uploaded to a national database called NQAIS Endoscopy. Information from private hospitals is also uploaded to NQAIS Endoscopy.

The NQAIS Endoscopy database is administered by the National Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Quality Improvement Programme. The Programme was developed under the remit of the Conjoint Board in Ireland of the Royal College of Physicians and Royal College of Surgeons in conjunction with the Quality Improvement Directorate of the HSE. The programme is managed by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Further information about the programme is available at [www.rcpi.ie/quality-improvement-programmes/gastrointestinal-endoscopy/](http://www.rcpi.ie/quality-improvement-programmes/gastrointestinal-endoscopy/)

Each year, data about the volume of colonoscopies performed (as well as other information) is published by National Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Quality Improvement Programme. Please note that information from both public and private hospitals is combined in the annual reports.

Information uploaded to NQAIS Endoscopy from 2015-2018 was published according to the academic/medical training year. Information covering the period July to December 2018 was published as a standalone/supplementary report which means that information from January 2019 onwards will be published according to the calendar year. For example, the next annual report to be published in November 2020 will contain information covering the period 01 January to 31 December 2019.

Reports published by the National Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Quality Improvement Programme are available online and the table below outlines an extraction from each report as it relates to the number of healthcare professionals who carried out colonoscopies during the timeframe covered by each report.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Report period</b>	<b>Hospitals include in the report</b>	<b>Number of healthcare professionals who carried out colonoscopies during the reported timeframe across all hospitals</b>
2016	1st National Data Report (01/07/2015 to 30/06/2016)	34 hospitals in total 29 public hospitals & 5 private hospitals	537
2017	2nd National Data Report (01/07/2016 to 07/07/2017)	36 hospitals in total 29 public hospitals & 7 private hospitals	599
2018 a	3rd National Data Report (07/07/2017 to 08/07/2018)	39 hospitals in total 31 public hospitals & 8 private hospitals	630
2018 b	4 <sup>th</sup> National Data Report (01/07/2018-31/12/2018)	42 hospitals in total 34 Public and 8 private hospitals	600
2019	5 <sup>th</sup> National Data Report (01/01/2019-31/12/2019)	Expected to include information from 35 public hospitals. Report due to be published during November 2020.	TBC
2020	6 <sup>th</sup> National Data Report (01/01/2019-31/12/2020)	Publication details to be determined.	TBC

Yours sincerely,




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**Carol Ivory**  
**General Manager**  
**Acute Operations**