



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
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16<sup>th</sup>. Sept. 2020

Deputy John Lahart  
TD  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ22515/To ask the Minister for Health the incidences of MRSA in hospitals for 2019 and to date in 2020 since the outbreak of Covid-19**

Dear Deputy Lahart,

The above PQ has been sent to my office for direct response to you on same.

Meticillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a variant of a common type of bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus*). MRSA are *Staphylococcus aureus* that are resistant to a particular family of antibiotics. Other *Staphylococcus aureus* that are not MRSA are known as Meticillin-susceptible *Staphylococcus aureus* (MSSA).

Most people who acquire MRSA in hospital are colonised but not infected. Colonisation with MRSA is not notifiable and is not collated at a national level by the HSE.

All *Staphylococcus aureus* blood stream infection acquired in hospital or in the community (including MRSA and MSSA) is a notifiable disease and so laboratories report this. Generally a break down on the number of these infections caused by MRSA and the number caused by MSSA provided on a quarterly basis through the EARS-Net programme based in the AMRIC Division of HPSC. At present the surveillance scientist staff who maintain the EARS-Net programme have been reassigned by the HPSC to COVID-19 related work therefore up to date data is not available.

The total of all *Staphylococcus aureus* blood stream infection acquired in hospital is reported by each hospital every month to the HSE the data is reviewed and informs the performance review process. That process is up to date (date to the end of July reported in Mid August has been reviewed) but the data collated and reviewed for this purpose does not differentiate between MRSA and MSSA.

Summary. There is no national collation of data on the total number of people who acquire MRSA in hospital. There is up to date data on the total number of people with hospital acquired Staphylococcus aureus blood stream infection but it does not include a break down between MRSA and MSSA.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelleher', with a horizontal line underneath.

**DR. KEVIN KELLEHER, FFPHM, FFPHMI**  
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