



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

10th February 2021

Deputy Gino Kenny
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 3798/21* To ask the Minister for Health his views and the data and on the way in which cancellations and reduced attendance at hospital affected health outcomes of patients generally and specifically in the case of persons over 65 years of age; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Kenny,

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.

Response

2020 saw a significant reduction in planned scheduled care activity volumes across acute hospital services including outpatients, inpatient and day case procedures due to the impact of COVID 19. This reduction in activity was aligned to the National Action Plan on COVID 19 and the Clinical Guidance that was developed as part of the response to the pandemic. During 2020 scheduled care activities mainly focused on urgent and time critical access.

In the latter part of 2020, as services adapted to new workflows and processes associated with providing care within a COVID environment, the number of patients treated began to increase. The number of patients being treated in the scheduled care pathway in the early part of 2021 has been affected by the latest surge in COVID-19 and the requirement to prioritise access for time – urgent care.

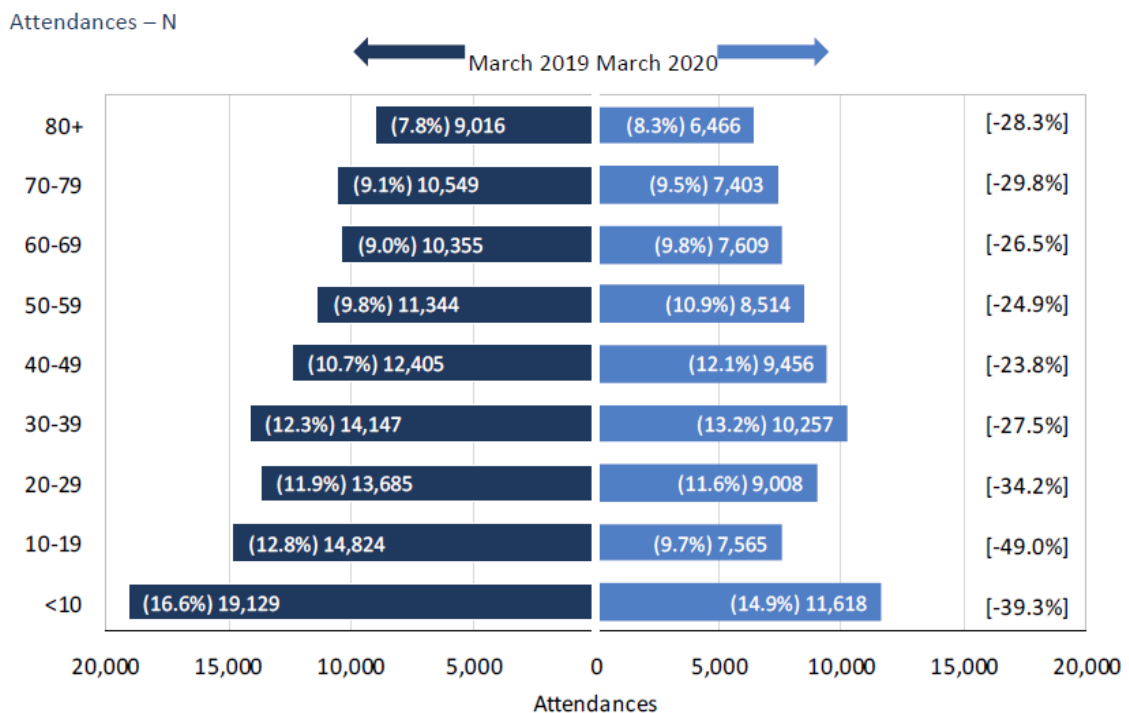
Appendix I and II (below) outlines the cancellation data for outpatients and inpatients from the 3rd January 2020 to 31st December 2020. This data is collected and provided by the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF). The data collected is on **new** patients and only data up to the end of 2020 which is the most recent reporting information available.

In this instance data is not collected specifically on specialist older person's services. Both the first wave and third wave of COVID-19 have resulted in a reduction in attendance in ED in over 75s of between 25-30%. It is not possible to identify what the impact of this will be and the impacts will not be age specific although, older people have a higher usage of health and social care services in general.

From early on a dramatic reduction in ED presentations across all age groups was noted with marked reduction in presentations to ED in older age groups of >30% (ESRI,2020). Over the

summer months ED attendances in older age groups have started to increase with increased presentations noted for August 2020 compared to August 2019 nationally.

FIGURE 6 ED ATTENDANCES BY AGE GROUP, N AND RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION, MARCH 2019/2020



Further information on the impact of cocooning measures on older people in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including Impact on Services Utilisation is available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/olderpeople/interim-report-on-the-impact-of-cocooning-measures-on-older-people.pdf>

It would be also be inappropriate to provide comment on health outcomes of patients “generally” as outcomes are measured for a particular disease with relevance to factors such as disease associated mortality, effectiveness of care, timeliness to care, admission to care and readmission.

I trust that this response answers your question.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Kidd
Assistant National Director
Acute Operations

Appendix I

Table 1: New outpatient cancellations

Month	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Grand Total
Total Cancellations	14,329	12,661	25,895	13,316	8,306	9,782	11,143	9,701	11,884	11,466	11,700	8,932	149,115

This data represents cancellations of new patients only, this data includes both patient and a hospital cancellation and this data includes patients who did not attend for their appointment.

Appendix II

Table 2: New inpatient/day case cancellations

Month	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Grand Total
Total Cancellations	4,003	4,020	13,607	4,794	2,210	2,186	2,824	2,809	3,613	4,081	3,825	3,204	51,176

This data represents cancellations of new patients only, this data includes both patient and a hospital cancellation and this data includes patients who did not attend for their planned procedure

