



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97, Ireland

5th March 2021

Deputy John Lahart,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 12435/21

"To ask the Minister for Health the details in respect of both Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin and Temple Street Children's University Hospital for the end of February 2021 or the latest date available for the number of spinal fusion patients currently waiting less than four months for treatment; the number waiting 4 to 8, and more than 8 months; and if he will provide the same information for other spinal patients in tabular form".

Dear Deputy Lahart,

I refer to your parliamentary question above to which I have been asked to provide a response on behalf of Children's Health Ireland (CHI).

CHI has made great efforts to continue with Scoliosis surgeries despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19. By the end of 2020 we had performed 163 surgeries compared with 189 the previous year. This was achieved by CHI clinical staff operating in new conditions in theatres and wards, with constrained patient flow and with access to diagnostics impacted by the need to comply with infection control guidance on COVID-19 and with full precautionary protective equipment.

Covid-19 has created a significant challenge to CHI as inpatient waiting times have increased and demand for surgery for urgent semi-urgent and time sensitive cases has steadily increased through the year. We are working with the HSE on our plans to set up extra clinics and sessions in the evenings and at weekend and to secure investment in additional MRI and other scanning equipment. For orthopaedics, we are expanding our activity in Cappagh Hospital. and subject to HSE funding in 2021, expect to make an impact on orthopaedic long waiters and within that reductions in waiting times for children with scoliosis. We are also running additional orthopaedic clinics in City West, using a new active clinical triage model, which is reducing the number of children waiting the longest for appointments.

Mission – To promote and provide child-centered, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

CRA Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20202295 Revenue Charitable Status CHY: 22235

Board Members: Prof James Browne (Chairman), Prof Niamh Brennan, Mr Con Cronin, Ms Mary Cryan, Mr Liam Dowdall, Prof Martin Elliott, Ms Catherine Guy, Dr Anne Kilgallen, Dr Gavin Lavery, Ms Brigid McManus, Mr Turlough O'Sullivan, Mr Sean Sheehan



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97, Ireland

CHI sincerely regret that children and their families are experiencing long waiting times for their appointments.

Managing complex spinal surgical patients is a shared care model between Orthopaedics and General Paediatrics. Preparing patients for spinal surgery is contingent on a number of requirements. Patients all require pre-operative work up including a multiple of diagnostic investigations and Multidisciplinary Team review and input. The complexity of a child's total medical condition dictates the level of planning and pre-operative work and time needed. There is a complex cohort of patients who also require additional clinical input by specialities such as General Paediatrics, throughout their continuum of care. Indeed, for some patients during the length of stay in the hospital, a significant proportion of their stay is co-managed by General Paediatrics.

CHI continues to actively monitor scoliosis-waiting times for surgery and proactively continue to work with the HSE and DoH to reduce waiting times for patients attending the service. As part of the 2021 National Service Plan, CHI has submitted proposals to the HSE for a number of initiatives which include the potential for further patients to be transferred to Cappagh Hospital for non-complex elective surgeries and outsourcing spinal patients to private providers.

CHI continue in partnership with the clinicians and all other stakeholders, the plan for 2021 is to drive further progress in reducing waiting times by developing a sustainable model which will ensure that clinical criteria will determine the timeframe for the delivery of care.

Representatives of CHI, the Orthopaedic Spinal Team and the Advocacy Groups continue to meet in a co-design fashion on a quarterly basis. This continues to be an extremely productive and forward thinking group who work on providing solutions for patients in the spinal service

I have attached, for your information, the most recent Bi-Monthly update on scoliosis as at 26th February 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Gannon
Chief Operations Officer
Children's Health Ireland
Email: joe.gannon@nchg.ie

Mission – To promote and provide child-centered, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

CRA Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20202295 Revenue Charitable Status CHY: 22235

Board Members: Prof James Browne (Chairman), Prof Niamh Brennan, Mr Con Cronin, Ms Mary Cryan, Mr Liam Dowdall, Prof Martin Elliott, Ms Catherine Guy, Dr Anne Kilgallen, Dr Gavin Lavery, Ms Brigid McManus, Mr Turlough O'Sullivan, Mr Sean Sheehan



Children's Health Ireland (CHI)

Update on Scoliosis Related Surgeries

Published on 1st March 2021



Dedicated Line for Parents

Both CHI at Crumlin and CHI at Temple Street have a dedicated line in place for parents only to deal with queries in relation to their child's scoliosis care plan.

Total Surgeries (including single and multiple stages) performed as of 26th February 2021

Week Ending 26/02/2021	CHI at Crumlin	CHI at Temple Street	Cappagh Hospital	Total
Number of Spinal Fusion YTD	22	4	5	31
Number of Other Spinal Procedures YTD	27	18	0	45
Total	49	22	5	76

CHI at Temple Street

Tel: 01 878 5596
Mon – Fri: 9.00am – 12.00 noon

CHI at Crumlin

Tel: 01 409 6877
Mon – Fri: 9.00am - 12.00 noon

Total number of patients on waiting lists clinically deemed as requiring surgery as of 26th February 2021

Week Ending 26/02/2021	Number of patients on waiting list waiting for scoliosis related surgeries Includes active, pre-admit and planned procedures (excluding suspensions*)	
	Number waiting for Spinal Fusion	Number waiting for other spinal procedures
CHI at Crumlin	86	40
CHI at Temple Street	21	28
Cappagh Hospital	14	0
Total	121	68

- Suspensions are patients temporarily unavailable due to clinical or family reasons

