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April 12th 2021

Deputy Cullinane,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 15174/21: To ask the Minister for Health the number of women who had mesh devices implanted and have had organs such as bladders and bowels removed; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The principle/ most reliable source of information in the Health Service Executive is the Hospital Inpatient Enquiry (HIPE) system. HIPE collects information on hospital day cases and in-patients in Ireland based on diagnostic related groups.

We reached out to HIPE with your request. Unfortunately, the code used by HIPE is not mesh specific, the same code is used when mesh is inserted and when it is not, therefore they were unable to harvest this information for us. Similarly, it is not possible to identify through this system the number of women who have had mesh devices implanted and have had organs removed.

We did however link with a Consultant in one of our specialist centres who advised while it may be necessary to excise some bladder or bowel **tissue** in order to repair there was no case for complete organ removal of either bladder or bowel due to mesh complications.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Kilian McGrane, Director, National Women and Infants Health Programme