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6th July 2021

Deputy Farrell
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref 23655/21: To ask the Minister for Health if he will request the HSE to make the risk assessments of all hospital maternity units publicly available.

Dear Deputy Farrell

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 guidance on visiting, including partners in the maternity context, is provided by the HSE's Anti-Microbial Infection Prevention and Control (AMRIC) team. This guidance is updated regularly, in line with the changing circumstances of the pandemic, the prevailing transmission rates and the level of vaccination in the population.

Hospitals have been advised that in circumstances where it has been determined at local level that these guidance protocols cannot be met due to health and safety considerations, that they should maintain and update their risk register and review their risk register on a weekly basis. These risk assessments are maintained and recorded at a local level and are not collated nationally.

In mid-June HSE Acute Operations and the NWIHP engaged with the six hospital groups and sought confirmation as to the compliance across the 19 maternity services in the four areas specified in the AMRIC guidance at that point in time.

HSE Acute Operations and the NWIHP will be re-engaging with the six hospital groups this week in order to seek further confirmation as to compliance across the 19 maternity to the revised AMRIC guidance that was issued on the 23rd June. Please see link below regarding current guidance in place.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/visitorsvisiting/Guidance%20on%20visits%20to%20Acute%20Hospitals.pdf>

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. Jo

Mary-Jo Biggs, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme