



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021

Deputy David Cullinane,  
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 52186/21\* *To ask the Minister for Health the number of surgical theatres across the HSE; the number which are closed due to equipment reasons, staffing reasons or other reasons in tabular form; 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.

**Response:**

The HSE does not have validated data on all aspects of your enquiry however available relevant information relating to theatre numbers and closures is provided and the definitions used in capturing theatre utilisation data. Please note that all attached information is issued as un-validated, as auditing resources are not available at this time. As you will appreciate, operating theatres fluctuate in response to changing demand and factors such as refurbishment, infection control measures, staffing shortages and the impact of COVID also have an impact on theatre availability; however, data supplied overleaf refers to the week ending the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Theatre Utilisation**

The information below relates to the week ending the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021. This data is compiled on a **test basis only**, full validation/ audit has not been carried out and there are not related KPIs in HSE NSP for 2019. The purpose of collecting data regarding theatre utilisation has been to ascertain theatre funded capacity and assess how many scheduled theatre sessions (half day/ night) are unused due to various issues. The collection template used is based on the following definitions/ assumptions

- Information is required in relation to operating theatres (including staffed emergency theatres), minor operations and procedure rooms which are currently operational.
- Details of rooms that were never commissioned /opened i.e. funding not approved or were decommissioned/ permanently closed are not required.
- Standard day = 2 sessions am + pm
- 24 hour theatre usually for emergency surgery= 4 sessions (2 day +2 night)  
Endoscopy rooms incorporated within theatre suite are included (usually in smaller hospitals only) but not endoscopy rooms in separate Endoscopy Units to theatre suite.

The focus is monitoring significant time unused for these reasons therefore details on the following are not required/ included:

- Sessions /operations cancelled due to short term (within the week) staff shortages associated with annual leave/sick leave etc.
- Sessions/operations cancelled due to temporary shortage of beds e.g. operation cancelled due to shortage on bed on day of surgery.
- Sessions/ operations cancelled due to patients being deemed unfit for surgery.
- Details of Operating Theatres within Maternity Units used for caesarean sections etc.
- Details of sessions unused in one room as staff required to assist with emergency surgery in another room.

Type of Room (Operating Theatre / Minor Ops / Endoscopy) <i>Enter OT, MO or ES</i>	Number of rooms	Number of rooms unused	Total No. of days unused	Days unused refurbishment / maintenance	Days unused Cost containment 2020	Days unused staff shortages	Days Unused Due To Covid 19 Response <i>Leave blank or enter a number 0 to 28</i>
Operating Theatre	199	10	94	15	2	15.5	<b>61.5</b>
Minor Theatre	13	2	1.5	0	0	1	<b>0.5</b>
Endoscopy	31	5	16	1.5	0	0	<b>14.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>111.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>76.5</b>

Note: there are no recorded submissions for the following sites for this period

- MRH Tullamore
- Mater Misericordiae University Hospital
- Our Lady's Hospital Navan
- Galway University Hospitals
- Mayo University Hospital

## **Working Definitions used (agreed with National Clinical Programme for Surgery)**

An operating theatre (OT) is a self-contained, aseptic room in which sterile and other surgical procedures can be carried out under general or regional anaesthesia; is normally equipped with an operating table, an anesthetic machine and adjustable illumination and whose size varies depending on the complexity of procedures and the equipment they require, varying from relatively small, such as for day surgery, to larger for complex procedures such as transplantation or open heart surgery.

A minor operations room (minor ops) (MO) is a self-contained, clean room in which low complexity sterile, and other surgical procedures can be carried out under local or regional anesthesia and is normally equipped with an operating table and adjustable illumination.

An endoscopy procedure room (ES) is a dedicated room where medical endoscopy is performed on patients on trolleys, commonly under sedation, with cameras used to visualize structures within the body such as the digestive, respiratory or genitourinary tracts.

I trust that this answers your question.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish King', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Trish King**  
**General Manager**  
**Acute Operations**