



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Airgeadais  
Feidhmeannacht na  
Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Seomra 125, Ospidéal  
Dr. Steevens  
BÁC 8

Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Health Service Executive  
Room 125, Dr Steevens  
Hospital  
Dublin 8

24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Deputy Peadar Tóibín TD,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**Re PQ 54910 21:** *To ask the Minister for Health the total amount spent by his Department on advertisements including traditional forms of advertisement and online advertising in each of the past ten years and to date in 2021.*

Dear Deputy Tóibín,

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. Your PQ above has been referred to me for response.

Please see the table in **Appendix 1** to this letter which provides total HSE spend on advertising in the 5 years 2016 to 2020. The data was sourced from the HSE Regional Finance ledger records and is for HSE statutory services only. The data is not readily available and needs to be extracted and collated from each regional finance ledger system. In an effort to minimise the impact on the work of the regional finance units, 5 years data for the years 2016 to 2020 only was requested. I trust this is to your satisfaction.

The HSE spend on advertising significantly increased in 2020 in direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The HSE has led the operational health response to COVID-19, and the extensive public health information, advertising and education programme that is a central part of that response. Communicating with the public, listening to their needs and giving accurate and easy-to-follow health advice is considered a central part of any country's pandemic response plan.

The COVID-19 public and staff information campaigns use a range of communications channels, including media relations with trusted health leaders and experts, websites, social media, search advertising, digital display, posted materials, out of home (posters, billboards, projections, transport), TV, video on demand, radio and digital audio advertising, to provide clear public health advice that is easy for people to understand and act on. We also connect with a group of over 500 supportive partner organisations and stakeholders within health and across society.

The HSE and Department of Health conduct regular research to check people's understanding of and their reaction to the information and ongoing situation, allowing any new messages or content to be developed in line with feedback. Consistently high satisfaction levels with the HSE's and the Dept of Health's information and communications have been reported in our research.

If you are seeking data relating to voluntary entities, you should submit FOI requests to these directly as publicly funded voluntary hospitals are separate entities for FOI purposes. Contact details for voluntary hospitals are available at <http://foi.gov.ie/voluntary-hospitals/>.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sarah.anderson1@hse.ie](mailto:sarah.anderson1@hse.ie) or tel: 087 9423319.

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Anderson*

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Sarah Anderson  
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Corporate Finance  
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## Appendix 1 to PQ 54910 21

Table 1

| <b>HSE Total Advertising costs for the years 2016 to 2020</b>   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <i>HSE Statutory services only</i>  |                         |
| <b>Year</b>   | <b>Amount<br/>€'000</b> |
| 2016 *  | 8,722                   |
| 2017 *  | 12,307                  |
| 2018  | 9,479                   |
| 2019  | 10,281                  |
| 2020  | 18,223                  |
| <i>Source: HSE Regional Finance Ledger Systems</i>  |                         |
| <i>* Figures for 2016 &amp; 2017 do not include some data from legacy systems which could not be extracted in time for this response - estimated to be in the region of €200k in each period.</i> |                         |
| <i>Note: Please note in view of the fact that there are still currently numerous ledger systems in operation in the HSE some differences in coding may arise.</i>                                 |                         |