



Oifig Cheannasaí na Caipiteal agus nEastát
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Ms Sorca Clarke, TD,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
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Dublin 2

12th October 2021

PQ 46823/21* To ask the Minister for Health the hospitals or centres of care per county which have been assessed as having asbestos in the buildings; and the actions that have been taken to ensure the health and safety of employees and former employees to assess the health impact that asbestos had.

Dear Deputy Clarke,

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.

The Requirement for management of Asbestos is dealt with under the SHWW Act 2005 (prior to that the 1989 SHWW Act) and Control of Asbestos at work regulations 2006-2010.

The HSE's duties under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006-2010 is to assess the risk to any employee's health or safety resulting from any activity from which an employee is, or may be exposed in their place of work to dust arising from asbestos containing materials (ACM's), and to determine the nature and degree of any employee's exposure to dust arising from such materials, and to lay down the necessary measures to be taken to ensure the safety and health of employees.

It is important to remember that as long as ACMs are not damaged or disturbed and remain in good condition, the risk of exposure from release of fibres is minimal and should not present any threat to the health of those occupying a building containing such materials. In good condition, ACMs do not necessarily require removal.

Within HSE Capital & Estates we have a policy and work practice in place to ensure that no refurbishment or demolition work (which could result in exposure of an individual to asbestos fibres) is undertaken without first ensuring that a detailed refurbishment demolition survey for ACM's is undertaken. This survey is either organised through local project managers for a project or through design teams on our behalf. For maintenance activities the survey is undertaken by the maintenance project manager for that task. The survey is then reviewed by the project manager/ and/or the design team and any remedial actions are undertaken prior to any works progressing to ensure that there are no risks to employees or any third parties who may be involved or in the vicinity.

The cost of the asbestos remedial works are usually dealt with as part of the overall project cost. Surveys are undertaken to HSG 264 (UK HSE) which is the standard requested by the HSA. The surveys undertaken include a risk assessment for ACMs which is assessed for the potential to release asbestos fibres. Where an asbestos survey has been carried out, the competent surveyor will provide recommendations, e.g. remove, repair or manage ACMs in the long term. These recommendations will normally be based on further parameters, such as occupancy levels, potential for disturbance, maintenance and human exposure potential. These types of surveys have been required since 2010 and prior to that from the year 2001 a similar survey was required under the HSE (UK) MDHS 100 document.

In addition to the requirement to survey any works that may result in potential asbestos fibre exposure, many of our buildings also have Management surveys undertaken. We are currently working through a process of collating and ensuring that buildings that were built prior to 1999 also have a Management survey (ref HSG 264 HSE UK).

Relevant staff have received training in recognising and dealing with asbestos material within their workplaces. This training is updated on annual basis. Where asbestos is in place in buildings there are Safe Operating Procedures required to ensure staff safety, these SOP's are based on the type and condition of the asbestos present. In most instances highly friable asbestos has been removed and/ or control measures to mitigate the risk have been implemented.

Due to the volume of hospitals and centres of care across the state it is not possible for Capital & Estates to provide this information on asbestos assessments for all locations at the present time. If the Deputy would like to be more specific regarding the locations of hospitals and centres of care then Capital & Estates will be more than happy to provide the required information.

Capital & Estates are currently developing a new National Estates Information System, one element of this system will be the centralization of health & safety information including asbestos surveys & assessments for all HSE buildings in the future.

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Yours sincerely,



Jim Curran
National Director,
Capital & Estates