

Corporate Affairs Department

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31st January, 2022

Deputy Paul Murphy

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Re: PQ ref 2125/22– *To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that those presenting to the accident and emergency department in St. James's Hospital must wait outside in line to gain entry; his views on whether waiting out in the freezing cold conditions is not the correct process for those who are already so ill they must attend the emergency department; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Murphy,

In accordance with best practice during the Covid-19 pandemic, on arrival to our Emergency Department (ED), patients are medically assessed (triaged) and are placed into either a Covid or non-Covid care pathway, before they enter our main ED. This requires the patient to be registered immediately on arrival and this is done from our new purpose-built hub that is situated just outside of the main department.

Every effort is made to minimise waiting times and to get patients into the ED as quickly as possible. Generally, patients are brought straight inside and are only asked to wait outside when it is not immediately possible to safely accommodate them inside. Due to space constraints outside of our ED, a tent is not a feasible option, however, our reception and triage areas are covered with a canopy directly above them.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Noel Gorman

Chief Operations Officer