



Géaroibríochtaí
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Míleata Cill Mhaighneann, Baile Átha Cliath 8

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Date: 14/07/2022

Deputy David Cullinane TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 35606/22

To ask the Minister for Health the functions of an acute surgical assessment unit; the nature of the work carried out in such a unit; the hospitals which have an MAU; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 35616/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of patients assessed in each acute surgical assessment unit for 2021 and up to the end of May 2022 broken down by each unit 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 Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Response:

Acute Surgical Assessment Units (also known as an Acute Surgical Admission Unit, Acute Surgical Unit or an Emergency Surgical Unit) provide a dedicated, transitory, centralised area where acutely ill surgical patients can be assessed and monitored prior to being admitted to hospital or otherwise treated and discharged. An ASAU's principle function and justification is to improve patient flow and provide better access to assessment, investigation and competent decision makers. ASAUs may be stand-alone, preferably in close proximity to an AMAU in a

Model 4 hospital or part of a wider emergency assessment unit with, for example, an AMAU in a Model 3 Hospital.

An ASAU provides the potential to stream less high acuity patients directly to their specialty decision makers. Treatment may be either on the spot, by ambulatory or outpatient care or, require admission.

ASAU's are located in Cork University Hospital, Galway University Hospital, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda, University Hospital Limerick, the Mater Hospital Dublin and in St Luke's Hospital Kilkenny and these sites are expected to meet the standard in relation to beds which is at least 2 dedicated monitored bays for trolleys and 2 chairs and the bays are suitably equipped with piped Oxygen, suction and monitoring equipment.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, and the need for additional capacity both in terms of staffing and resources, the ASAU function was suspended in some of the sites due to staff and space being redeployed. As such, the ASAUs did not operate consistently throughout 2020 and 2021 and as a result ASAU activity is not available, as the purpose of some wards in some hospitals changed.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations