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29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**PQ 31049/22:** To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 616 of 3 February 2021, the number of cancer patients who saw a consultant in 2019, 2020 and 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

Further to **Parliamentary Question No. 616** ([https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-02-03/616/#pq\\_616](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-02-03/616/#pq_616)) of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 the response updated to include complete annual data for 2019-2021 is set out below.

**Note:** Data on the number of patients with a confirmed cancer diagnosis who saw a consultant, e.g. for further investigation or treatment of their cancer, is not collated by or available to the NCCP. This type of data would need to be sought from individual hospitals.

The national cancer control programme (NCCP) collates a small subset of aggregate data related to specific tumours and are mostly associated with the monitoring of rapid access cancer assessment services in adults.

The number of newly referred patients who attended Symptomatic Breast Disease Clinics, Lung Rapid Access Clinics and Prostate Rapid Access Clinics in 2019, 2020 and 2021 is shown in Table 1. These clinics operate in each of the 8 designated cancer centres with one additional breast satellite clinic. **It is important to note that these are symptomatic patients being assessed for suspected cancer, the majority of whom will not be diagnosed with cancer.** Data on symptomatic cancer clinics for other tumour types is not collected by the NCCP.

First Attendances at SBD/RAC Clinics	2019	2020	2021
Breast - Urgent	20,905	20,523	25,367
Breast - Non Urgent	21,917	17,365	18,540
Lung RAC	3,606	3,338	3,679
Prostate RAC	3,822	3,048	3,624

**Table 1 - Total number of new patients attending symptomatic breast disease clinics and rapid access clinics for suspected lung and prostate cancers.**

Please note that the original request was for “**the number of cancer patients who saw a consultant**” in each year. This would presume that the patient **already has a cancer diagnosis** which is **fundamentally different from the SBD/RAC first attendance data presented above.**

Data on the number of patients with a confirmed cancer diagnosis who saw a consultant, e.g. for further investigation or treatment of their cancer, is not collated by or available to the NCCP. This type of data would need to be sought from individual hospitals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Risteárd Ó Laoide'.

Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide  
National Director  
National Cancer Control Programme

