



**Stiúthóra Náisiúnta  
Acmhainní Daonna**  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí,  
Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens',  
Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8.

**National Director  
Human Resources**  
Health Service Executive,  
Dr Steevens' Hospital,  
Dublin 8, 08 W2A8

**www.hse.ie  
@hselive**  
t 01 6352319  
e nationalhr@hse.ie

Holly Cairns T.D.

30<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

**PQ 31764/22 To ask the Minister for Health if his Department and public bodies and agencies that operate under his remit have policies in place for employees to report instances of sexual harassment or assault that occur involving other employees or members of the public or on the property of his Department or each public body and agency that operate under his remit; if so, if these policies are publicly accessible on the relevant website; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Holly Cairns**

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question which was sent to the HSE for response.

The **Dignity at Work Policy for the Public Health Service, which was initially implemented in 2004**, has recently been updated to reflect the **Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work (2020 Code)** developed by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and the **Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work (2022)** issued by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) in accordance with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015. The revised policy, which has been agreed with the health service trade unions, will apply to all public health service bodies and is due to be launched in July 2022.

The revised Dignity at Work Policy (2022) replaces the 2009 Dignity at Work Policy for the Health Service – Anti Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure. The policy is available on the HSE website [here](#).

The Dignity at Work Policy aims to provide a safe working environment for all employees in the public health service which recognises their right to be treated with dignity and respect and which is free from all forms of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment. The Policy is a key tool in health sector organisations' management of their statutory health and safety responsibilities with regard to preventing and managing risks associated with bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

The Policy defines sexual harassment as well as bullying and harassment and sets out the process for making a complaint and how it shall be dealt with.

The Policy aims to protect employees from bullying, sexual harassment or harassment perpetrated by a patient/client, supplier, visitor or any other person with whom employees may come into contact during the course of their work. Bullying/ harassment/ sexual harassment by non-employees may result in the termination/non-renewal of business contracts, the suspension/non-renewal of services, exclusion from the premises or the imposition of other appropriate sanctions.

Yours sincerely,

**Marie O'Sullivan  
National HR**