



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Rannan na nOspideil Ghearmhíochaine  
Aonad 4A – Áras Dargan  
An Ceantar Theas  
An Bothar Mileata  
Cill Mhaighneann  
BÁC 8

Acute Operations  
Health Service Executive  
Unit 4A - The Dargan Building  
Heuston South Quarter  
Military Road  
Kilmainham  
Dublin 8.

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

Deputy **Peadar Tóibín**  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 31869/22 \* To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE or individual hospitals have engaged private companies for the purpose of debt collection from patients or former patients who have failed to pay their hospital bills; and if so, the number of companies that have been engaged; the cost of the contracts; and the name of the companies, and if he will make a statement on the matter.\***

Dear Deputy Tóibín,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

### **Response:**

Patients who attend at public hospitals are, depending on their eligibility, and subject to certain exemptions, liable to statutory charges. These are levied under the provisions of the 1970 Health Act. The charges are €100 for an Emergency Department attendance and €80 for an overnight stay, the latter charge is capped at €800 in any 12 month period. The HSE has a statutory obligation to levy and collect these charges and Hospitals have the discretion to operate payment plans where appropriate.

Hospitals are required, under HSE National Financial Regulation, NFR 25, to refer any unpaid debt to a collection agency after a period of time from date of billing. Debt collection continues to be managed at a local hospital level. If any patient has difficulty paying a hospital bill the regulations allow for the hospital and the patient to agree an instalment arrangement. We would advise they contact their hospital directly to discuss this on a one to one basis.

Hospital Groups have advised that the standard practice for debt collection is to issue reminders of outstanding debts to patients before referral to a debt collection agency. The quantity and frequency of these reminders varies between hospital groups and individual hospitals but generally debt collection agencies are not contacted until the debt in question has been outstanding for at least 6 weeks and no communication has been received from the patient or where no payment plan has been agreed between the patient and hospital.

The table below details the costs incurred by HSE hospitals from 2019, 2020 and to October 2021, which is the the most recent period for which data is readily available.

**DEBT COLLECTION COSTS 2019 - 2021 BY HOSPITAL AND SERVICE PROVIDER**

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Hospital Name</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>YTD Oct 2021</b>
<b>CMOS LIMITED</b>	Our Lady's Hospital Navan			955
<b>DEBITASK COLLECTION SERVICES LTD</b>	CORK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL	107,461	99,784	86,194
	Croom Hospital	638	2,327	1,609
	CUMH	2,950	3,389	1,572
	Ennis Hospital	2,193	3,431	2,124
	KERRY GENERAL HOSPITAL	2,707	6,749	20,850
	MALLOW GENERAL HOSPITAL	65	5,802	1,953
	Naas General Hospital	16,516	7,162	111
	Nenagh Hospital	4,015	6,845	
	St. Columcille's Hospital	4,577	6,009	3,066
	University Hospital Limerick	18,810	24,197	10,162
	University Maternity Hospital, Limerick	392	1,025	1,533
<b>DUNRAVEN POINT OF CARE LTD</b>	MRH PORTLAOISE			8,518
	MRH Tullamore			34,489
	Naas General Hospital	12,977	3,461	1,641
	University Hospital Galway	35,647	18,601	3,940
<b>GARWYN GROUP</b>	Mayo University Hospital	33,091	8,902	12,556
	Naas General Hospital			1,085
	Saotla HQ		73,800	
	University Hospital Galway	10,509	25,233	4,451
<b>INTRUM JUSTITIA IRELAND LTD</b>	Cavan General Hospital	19,608	8,543	
	Croom Hospital	438		
	Ennis Hospital	1,417		
	Louth County Hospital	6,999	3,534	
	Nenagh Hospital	2,204		
	Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda	52,509	10,987	
	Our Lady's Hospital Navan	5,804	331	
	Portiuncla Hospital	23,667	5,447	
	Portiuncla University Hospital			87
	Roscommon University Hospital	1,996	540	
	University Hospital Galway	13,131	7,453	120
	University Hospital Limerick	12,741		
	University Hospital Waterford	29		
	University Maternity Hospital, Limerick	499		
<b>LCMS LTD</b>	Connolly Hospital	45,018	32,094	38,987
	Kilcreene Hospital	361	444	263
	Letterkenny University Hospital	10,899	4,682	55
	Mayo University Hospital	16,951	23,298	851
	MRH MULLINGAR	30,830	24,933	15,085
	MRH PORTLAOISE	24,810	28,041	13,852
	MRH Tullamore	32,396	27,314	24,369
	Naas General Hospital			20,145
	Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda	126		
	Our Lady's Hospital Navan	8,423	10,546	6,648
	Sligo University Hospital	14,964	12,150	591
	South Tipperary General Hospital	15,982	7,342	5,984
	St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny	16,835	13,455	7,968
	University Hospital Waterford	46,297	27,121	19,949
	Wexford General Hospital	29,343	23,103	11,201
<b>Total</b>		<b>686,826</b>	<b>568,074</b>	<b>362,964</b>

I trust that this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Dunne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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**Brian Dunne**  
**General Manager**  
**Acute Operations**