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PQ 32673/22: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons that attended prostate rapid access clinics regardless of waiting time; the number and proportion that attended within the recommended 10 working days, for each quarter between 2015 to present, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 32674/22: To ask the Minister for Health the proportion of all prostate cancer diagnoses made as a result of an persons' attendance at a prostate rapid access clinic in each of the years 2015 to 2021, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Guirke,

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 rapid access assessment services for Symptomatic Breast Disease (SBD) Clinics, Rapid Access Lung Clinics (RALC) and Rapid Access Prostate Clinics (RAPC) 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.**

The total number of newly referred patients having first attendance at rapid access prostate clinics and the percentage of those seen within 20 working days of receipt of referral at the cancer centre is given in Table 1. Please note that the recommended timeframe for the rapid access prostate service is 20 working days and not 10 working days as stated in the original PQ request.

New Attendances to Rapid Access Prostate Clinics	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	2,559	698	656	611	594
2016	2,582	621	695	621	645
2017	3,018	762	768	757	731
2018	3,362	765	789	895	913
2019	3,822	877	1,109	980	856
2020	3,048	972	541	752	783
2021	3,624	841	795	904	1,084
2022	*	1,232	*	*	*

Attendances within 20 working days of Referral	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	60.7%	60.9%	67.2%	58.9%	55.1%
2016	53.5%	60.1%	46.2%	57.3%	51.3%
2017	62.0%	42.1%	60.9%	66.6%	78.9%
2018	78.3%	73.2%	81.4%	70.9%	87.3%
2019	67.1%	78.9%	55.8%	72.9%	63.1%
2020	52.0%	46.7%	48.8%	55.6%	57.3%
2021	66.5%	55.8%	63.3%	70.9%	73.4%
2022	*	74.0%	*	*	*

Table 1 - Total number of new patients attending rapid access prostate clinics in the 8 cancer centres and the percentage seen within 20 working days; 2015 to Q1 2022.

The NCCP has established RACs for suspected breast, lung and prostate cancers, cancers which combined account for 42% of the almost 25,000 invasive cancers (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) diagnosed in Ireland each year. The RACs, operating from the eight designated cancer centres and one additional breast satellite centre, provide a streamlined pathway to diagnostic evaluation and specialist review for these three major cancers.

However, not all breast, lung and prostate cancers are diagnosed through the RACs. While it is estimated that almost all **symptomatic** patients attending public hospitals and subsequently diagnosed with breast cancer are diagnosed via the **symptomatic** breast disease clinics, only about half of all lung cancers and a third of prostate cancers are diagnosed via the rapid access route.

NCCP cannot give more precise figures as data on the national picture to include both private and public activity and those diagnosed outside of the symptomatic SBD/RAC services or via the national breast screening programme are not collected by the NCCP.

Yours sincerely



Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide
National Director
National Cancer Control Programme

