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PQ 33060/22: To ask the Minister for Health the absolute total number of persons who attended symptomatic breast disease clinics regardless of waiting time and the number and proportion who attended for each of the pathways that is, urgent recommended two weeks and non-urgent 12 weeks, in Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 between 2015 and 2021 and to date in 2022, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter

PQ 33061/22: To ask the Minister for Health the proportion of all breast cancer diagnoses made as a result of a person's attendance at symptomatic breast disease clinics in each of the years 2015 to 2021, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Pringle,

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 symptomatic breast disease clinics and triaged as **urgent** and the percentage of those seen within 10 working days of receipt of referral at the cancer centre is given in Table 1.

New Attendances to SBD clinics triaged as Urgent	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	17,255	3,925	4,264	4,351	4,715
2016	18,949	4,796	4,959	4,652	4,542
2017	19,267	5,025	4,745	4,658	4,839
2018	20,482	4,792	5,224	5,003	5,463
2019	20,905	5,338	5,406	5,006	5,155
2020	20,523	4,838	4,429	5,249	6,007
2021	25,367	6,033	6,197	6,559	6,578
2022	*	6,573	*	*	*

Urgent Attendances within 10 working days of Referral	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	96.9%	94.9%	97.8%	95.7%	98.8%
2016	87.8%	96.9%	80.8%	86.8%	86.9%
2017	75.4%	79.5%	76.6%	66.0%	78.9%
2018	75.0%	90.7%	57.2%	62.3%	90.0%
2019	70.0%	69.3%	65.6%	74.5%	70.8%
2020	70.5%	78.2%	80.9%	58.8%	66.7%
2021	55.8%	72.2%	55.7%	43.6%	53.1%
2022	*	61.8%	*	*	*

Table 1 - Total number of new patients triaged as **urgent** attending symptomatic breast disease clinics in the 8 cancer centres and one additional breast satellite clinic and the percentage seen within 10 working days; 2015 to Q1 2022.

The total number of newly referred patients having first attendance at symptomatic breast disease clinics and triaged as **non-urgent** and the percentage of those seen within 12 weeks of receipt of referral at the cancer centre is given in Table 2.

New Attendances to SBD clinics triaged as Non-Urgent	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	23,061	6,189	5,777	5,480	5,615
2016	22,384	5,763	5,874	5,539	5,208
2017	21,546	5,651	5,332	5,550	5,013
2018	22,390	5,403	5,669	5,210	6,108
2019	21,917	5,267	6,016	5,282	5,352
2020	17,365	4,998	1,968	4,700	5,699
2021	18,540	4,445	4,784	4,453	4,858
2022	*	4,150	*	*	*

Non-Urgent Attendances within 12 weeks of Referral	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2015	83.8%	80.5%	85.5%	84.0%	85.8%
2016	72.8%	82.6%	76.7%	62.6%	68.1%
2017	71.1%	74.8%	68.1%	69.2%	72.2%
2018	68.1%	71.3%	71.8%	67.0%	62.8%
2019	70.6%	66.5%	72.7%	70.9%	71.9%
2020	57.0%	69.0%	55.6%	51.5%	51.5%
2021	41.6%	47.6%	37.1%	37.1%	44.6%
2022	*	52.3%	*	*	*

Table 2 - - Total number of new patients triaged as **non-urgent** attending symptomatic breast disease clinics in the 8 cancer centres and one additional breast satellite clinic and the percentage seen within 12 weeks; 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

