



Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore  
Arden Road  
Tullamore  
Tel: 057 9358072

20/04/2022

Deputy David Cullinane  
Dáil Eireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**RE: Ref: 17052/22**

**RE: *“To ask the Minister for Health the amount recovered through the use of debt collectors and or debt collection agencies in respect of the collection of fees and charges on patients attending hospital groups managed by Tullamore Hospital in each of the years 2017 to 2021, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.***

Dear Deputy,

Further to your recent correspondence regarding the above, I can advise the following:

Year	Amount
2017	€97,131
2018	€106,504
2019	€104,364
2020	€88,106
2021	€94,971

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.

Further information on Hospital Charges is available on the HSE website at <https://scanner.topsec.com/?r=show&d=1762&t=110061d03d66b2a5c4e58bb8131d19c127261605&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hse.ie%2Feng%2Fabout%2Fwho%2Facute-hospitals-division%2Fpatient-care%2Fhospital-charges>

HSE policy and procedures for debt collection are covered by NFR 25(National Financial Regulations) which is available to view on the HSE website on the link below:  
<https://scanner.topsec.com/?r=show&d=1762&t=267a1f8fb608e4b5a606f999003032e1d1c4e1d9&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hse.ie%2Feng%2Fstaff%2Fresources%2Ffinancial%2520regulations%2Fnfr25.pdf> Hospitals are required, under NFR 25, to refer an unpaid debt to a collection agency after a period of time from date of billing.

If any patient has difficulty paying a hospital bill the regulations allow for the hospital and the patient to agree an instalment arrangement. The Hospital has pathways available to patients should they have difficulty in this regard.

The HSE seeks to maximise the recovery of income in a socially responsible, ethical, efficient and cost effective way.

If I can provide any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

*Catriona McDonald*

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Catriona McDonald  
General Manager