

16th May 2022

PQ 23512/22

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

I refer to your PQ request 23512/22 which was forwarded to the HSE for response.

***PQ 23512/22** To ask the Minister for Health the number of assaults recorded against medical, nursing, midwifery and other health and social care professionals across HSE hospitals and community healthcare facilities to date for each month in 2022 and for October, November and December 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Background

With regard to the above request for information, please see below the report on Assaults on HSE Staff.

To assist with understanding the report/data more fully, I feel it appropriate to firstly give a brief background to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and to the data in the report. In 2015 the NIMS system was introduced by the SCA. This requires all incidents to be reported through a national centralised system and will ultimately improve the quality of the data. However, the HSE has long been proactive in encouraging staff to report all incidents and this is enshrined in the Corporate Safety Statement, Violence and Aggression policy and Incident Management Framework and Guidance.

Please note that the following conditions apply to the data:

- All physical, verbal and sexual assaults on staff that have been reported on NIMS are included
- Assaults include a problem/cause of: physical, verbal or sexual assault on staff in the HSE that occurred between 01/10/2021 and 12/05/2022.
- The report was run by “Date of Incident”, which is the date on which the incident occurred
- An incident can be a harmful Incident (Adverse Event), no harm incident, near miss, dangerous occurrence (reportable circumstance) or complaint
- This report is correct as of 12/05/2022.

When considering the figures in the report it should be noted that staff are encouraged to report all “near misses” and incidents – even those that **do not** result in harm. Hence, the number of incident reports should not be considered as indicative of a level of harm. There may also be multiple reports relating to the same incident.

Table 1. Incidents by category of person affected from 01/10/21-12/05/22**Comment**

Count of Record Number	Column Labels										Grand Total
	2021					2022					
Row Labels	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May			
Allied Health Professional	77	92	64	96	79	58	47	16	529		
Ambulance/Service User Transport	5	2	4	1	3	2		1	18		
Catering/Housekeeping	3	6		6	2	2	4		23		
Dental	1								1		
Locum						1			1		
Medical	19	10	12	4	8	11	3		67		
Nursing	315	277	321	312	362	381	194	32	2194		
Other Staff	295	251	263	263	241	282	167	26	1788		
Professional Grades	1	3				1			5		
Professional Volunteer					1				1		
Service User	1								1		
Tech/Maintenance	1	3	1	1	5	9	5		25		
Grand Total	718	644	665	683	701	747	420	75	4653		

The figures show that there is a level of variation in the reported incidents, however the organisation continues to encourage the reporting of all incidents (regardless of the level of harm, if any).

Ensuring the safety of employees and service users is a priority concern for the HSE. The HSE is committed to creating a safe environment within which to work or to be treated.

There is an emphasis on training and equipping the workforce effectively with skills on risk identification and the management of violence and aggression.

Training in relation to the Management of Violence and Aggression may be accessed in all services.

The organisation will continue to place an emphasis on the management of work related aggression and violence in 2022 to support the Organisation's strategy and policy.

I trust this will answer your request, however please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Nicholas J Parkinson

Head of National Health and Safety Function