



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire  
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97 Ireland

Our Ref: PQ 57146/22

14<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Deputy David Cullinane**  
**Dáil Eireann**  
**Dublin 2**

Dear Deputy Cullinane

I refer to your recent PQ which has been forwarded to me for attention.

**PQ 57146/22: To ask the Minister for Health if Children's Health Ireland sought the use of medical students to work in emergency departments during the October 2022 bank holiday weekend at any of its location; if so, if this is standard practice; the number of occasions on which medical students have been sought for work in emergency departments outside of normal educational practice; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:**

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) at Temple Street had Medical Students volunteer to assist the doctor and nurses in the Emergency Department during the October 2022 Bank Holiday weekend. CHI is currently going through a period of intense pressure in our emergency departments, caused primarily by a perfect storm of increased presentation of children with viral respiratory infections and staff shortages. This has led for us to declare a level 3 escalation.

This is not standard practice and medical students have never been drafted in to assist in our emergency departments in the past.

The final year medical students are from UCD and have volunteered to do shifts in our emergency departments as clinical assistants (supporting the nurses and doctors) and this has been a massive help for our staff and patients. These medical students are doing their paediatric rotation and would have been rotating through our hospitals ordinarily but this is an extra-ordinary gesture for which CHI is immensely grateful.

The feedback from the students has been overwhelmingly positive and they have written back to CHI asking to do more shifts and have indicated their availability during their Christmas holidays.

Yours sincerely

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