



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Rannan na nOspideil Ghearmhíochaine
Aonad 4A – Áras Dargan
An Ceantar Theas
An Bothar Mileata
Cill Mhaighneann
BÁC 8

Acute Operations
Health Service Executive
Unit 4A - The Dargan Building
Heuston South Quarter
Military Road
Kilmainham
Dublin 8.

31st August 2022

Deputy Roisin Shortall
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2.

PQ42934/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons currently on a waiting list for prophylactic breast removal by each waiting time period in each hospital in tabular form.

PQ 42935/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons currently on a waiting list to access reconstructive surgery as a result of having undergone prophylactic breast removal surgery by each waiting time period in each hospital in tabular form. -

PQ 42936/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons currently on a waiting list for prophylactic ovary removal by each waiting time period in each hospital in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Response:

In the context of your request the HSE do not hold information centrally in relation to patients waiting for access “prophylactic” treatment/services. Appendix I provides information from the NTPF which shows all patients waiting for these surgeries outlined in tables a, b and c. The figures provided will include those awaiting breast reconstruction who previously had a mastectomy as part of their cancer treatment.

Time to cancer treatment surgery is prioritised and monitored within cancer centres and by the National Cancer Control Programme and falls under specific time bound KPIS.

Prophylactic breast and ovary removal are usually carried out as risk-reducing surgeries for women who have been diagnosed with a BRCA gene alteration. Women with a BRCA gene alteration have an increased risk of developing cancer, particularly breast and ovarian cancer.

Women who are diagnosed with a BRCA gene alteration usually elect to undergo a period of surveillance with breast imaging prior to considering bilateral mastectomy (breast removal). Risk reducing bilateral mastectomy can be carried out with bilateral reconstruction at the same time, known as immediate reconstruction. This is a complex procedure, particularly where reconstruction is being carried out using the patient's own tissue rather than implants, and requires significant theatre time and expert surgeons. As these patients do not yet have breast cancer, they are prioritised behind women with cancer who are awaiting surgery.

This is an issue which has been exacerbated by the pandemic, as when hospitals and staffing levels are under unprecedented pressure, elective surgical services are curtailed and cancer treatment surgeries have been prioritised over risk-reducing surgery. A further challenge is that this type of complex surgery is generally not suitable or appropriate to be outsourced.

I trust this is of assistance.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trish King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped flourish at the end of the name.

Trish King
General Manager
Acute Operations

Appendix I.

Table a. Mastectomy at 28th August 2022 (Data Source NTPF)

Row Labels	0-6 Months	6-12 Months	12-18 Months	18+ Months	Grand Total
Beaumont Hospital	8				8
Cork University Hospital	27				27
Galway University Hospitals	42	18	7	12	79
Letterkenny University Hospital	11				11
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	109	30	13	11	163
Small Volume Hospitals	6	11	9	7	33
South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital	7				7
St. James's Hospital	103	38	23	52	216
St. John's Hospital Limerick	11				11
St. Vincent's University Hospital	57	11	10		78
University Hospital Waterford	23	7		15	45
Grand Total	404	115	62	97	678

Table b. Breast Reconstruction at 28th August 2022 (Data Source NTPF)

Row Labels	0-6 Months	6-12 Months	12-18 Months	18+ Months	Grand Total
Beaumont Hospital	21	23	12		56
Galway University Hospitals		7		34	41
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	6				6
Roscommon University Hospital				7	7
Small Volume Hospitals	8	8	9	8	33
St. James's Hospital	8			7	15
St. Vincent's University Hospital	5				5
Grand Total	48	38	21	56	163

Table c. Oophorectomy (Ovary Removal) at 28th August 2022

Row Labels	0-6 Months	6-12 Months	12-18 Months	18+ Months	Small Volume Time Bands	Grand Total
Galway University Hospitals	5					5
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital	5		5			10
Small Volume Hospitals	18	14		5	1	38
Grand Total	28	14	5	5	1	53