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27th September 2022

Re. PQ 42938/22: To ask the Minister for Health the volume of prophylactic ovary removal surgeries within the recommended timeframe as an absolute number and as a proportion of total prophylactic ovary removal surgeries in each of the years 2010 to 2021, in tabular form?

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The National Cancer Control Programme has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above PQ.

Removal of both ovaries and fallopian tubes is carried out as a risk-reducing surgery for women who have been diagnosed with a BRCA gene alteration or other cancer-predisposing gene. It is not possible from available data to accurately ascertain the number of women undergoing this procedure, or the times to surgery. The NCCP has recognised this as a gap and that a disease-specific patient registry solution will be required as a component of comprehensive care for those with a cancer predisposition.

In relation to the provision of cancer risk-reducing surgeries, challenges in relation to access were exacerbated by the pandemic. When hospitals and staffing levels were under unprecedented pressure, elective surgical services were curtailed and cancer treatment surgeries prioritised over risk-reducing surgery. Not with-standing the rest, four of the seven cancer centres have no patients on waiting lists for this particular risk-reducing surgeries at this point in time. Three hospitals continue to have patients on waiting lists, and these are being dealt with by all the cancer centres supporting the patient transfers as required. The waiting times are about four months, but there are instances where this is longer, up to two years.

Yours Sincerely



Professor Risteárd Ó Laoide
National Director
National Cancer Control Programme