



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/46112/22

18<sup>th</sup> October 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. Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in issuing a response.

**PQ: To ask the Minister for Health the number of children on waiting lists for scoliosis and spina bifida related orthopaedic procedures and consultations for each month in each of the years 2016 to 2021 and to date in 2022, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

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

I have followed up with Children's Health Ireland (CHI) and the National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh and set out in the attached document information in relation to the number of children on waiting lists for scoliosis and spina bifida related Orthopaedic Procedures.

With regard to waiting list data for Orthopaedic Consultations for Scoliosis and Spina Bifida patients. Please note, patients awaiting an Orthopaedic Consultation are recorded on the iPMS Patient Administration System, but this national system does not have the function to record the waiting sub category for a speciality. In addition, as CHI do not have an electronic health record, and clinical patient details pertaining to medical conditions are not stored on any databases, we are not in a position to advise on waiting lists for Orthopaedic Consultations for this cohort of patients.

In February of this year Children's Health Ireland (CHI) welcomed the announcement of funding approved from the Department of Health to bring down waiting times for access to children's services in CHI, with Scoliosis and Spina Bifida a priority focus within the Paediatric Orthopaedic specialty. The funding also supported a joint initiative with the National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh to substantially increase the clinically appropriate paediatric Orthopaedic Scoliosis and Spina Bifida work undertaken in the National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh.

The *Waiting List Scoliosis/Spina Bifida Action Plan* and funding was formally agreed with the HSE and Department of Health in April of this year. This plan covered Paediatric Orthopaedic



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services in CHI at Crumlin, CHI at Temple Street, the National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh and the Blackrock Clinic.

As at the end of August 2022, across these hospitals, 342 spinal procedures have been undertaken - 115 more surgeries when compared with 227 cases undertaken in the same period last year.

Progress has also been made with reducing the longest waiting times for scoliosis treatment:

- Reduction in the number of patients waiting over four months from 99 to 72 (27 per cent reduction since January 2022)
- Reduction in patients waiting over 12 months for surgery from 34 to 21 (38 per cent reduction since January 2022)
- The total spinal waiting list has reduced from 224 to 212 in the same period.  
*\*Data period up to 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2022.*

Yours sincerely

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