



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta
Géaroibríochtaí

Aonad 4A, Áras Dargan, An Ceantar Theas,
An Bóthar Mileata, Cill Mhaighneann, Baile
Átha Cliath 8, D08 NN9V

Office of the National Director
Acute Operations

Unit 4a, the Dargan Building, Heuston
South Quarter, Military Road,
Kilmainham, Dublin 8, D08 NN9V

www.hse.ie
@hselive

t 01 795 9959
e acute.operations@hse.ie

Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House

6th March, 2023

PQ 8014/23 – To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the high incidence of physical and verbal assaults on frontline healthcare workers; if he will take steps to ensure adequate funding for the Health and Safety Authority in order to establish a dedicated health sector unit to oversee workplace safety at all public healthcare facilities; if he will arrange for a full review of security measures at all emergency departments; if he will further arrange for a public awareness programme in this regard in order to reduce such assaults; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of part of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I understand from the Department of Health that they will be answering the part on the Health and Safety Authority.

We have liaised with various departments within the HSE and the below information was provided to us by National Health and Safety Function, Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit, National Human Resources, and Acute Operations Human Resources Department.

With regard to the first part of your question, please see below the report on Assaults on HSE Staff. Please note the data provided below is reflective of reported incidents from all HSE frontline healthcare workers across acute and community settings (a subset of which pertains to Emergency Departments). HSE proactively encourages 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 01/01/2022 and 24/02/2023.
- 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.
- Values between 1-5 have been redacted and are denoted by ~
- This report is correct as of 24/02/2023.
- Excludes: Voluntary Organisations

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 01/01/2022 – 24/02/2023

Category of Person, Affected	2022	2023	Grand Total
Allied Health Professional	285	34	319
Ambulance/Service User Transport	26	7	33
Catering/Housekeeping	39	~	44
Dental	~	~	~
Locum	~	~	~
Maintenance/Trades	~	~	~
Medical	79	8	87
Nursing	3295	263	3558
Other Staff	1546	136	1682
Professional Grades	6	~	6
Professional Volunteer	~	~	~
Tech/Maintenance	45	6	51
Grand Total	5327	462	5789

*Please note that this NIMS data may contain anomalies and is subject to further change following ongoing data analysis.

Due to delays in reporting, numbers are likely to change overtime, 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.

The organisation will continue to place an emphasis on the management of work related aggression and violence in 2023 to support the Organisation's strategy and policy. Key focus areas are:

- National policy on the management of work related aggression and violence (policy review)
- Risk Assessment
- Training
- HSE will seek to develop improved communications and public awareness campaign

Human Resources and Acute Operations representatives continue to engage with representative bodies on a range of Emergency Department matters, to include the issue of security under the auspices of the Workplace Relations Commission.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Nessa Lynch
General Manager
Acute Operations