



Ref: PQ 35058/23

11th August 2023

Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Eireann
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Cullinane

I refer to your below parliamentary question which has been forwarded to me for attention. Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in issuing a response.

PQ 35058/23 - To ask the Minister for Health if children with scoliosis are currently offered the option of having treatment and surgery abroad as part of arrangements agreed with hospitals in England, Germany and France in 2017; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:

The HSE previously put in place a service for children with scoliosis whereby they were offered the option of having treatment and surgery abroad as part of arrangements agreed with hospitals in England, Germany and France in 2017. This service was in place for a definitive period of time and has now ceased however, the Minister has requested that the HSE explore this. While this is not a long-term fix, all options need to be explored given the significant increase in demand.

Last year the Minister approved a plan from Children's Health Ireland to reduce the number of children waiting for spinal orthopaedic procedures (scoliosis/spina bifida). Some €19 million of current and capital funding was committed to tackle waiting lists.

The Government continues to invest significant funding to help clinicians reduce the amount of time children are waiting for important hospital appointments and procedures. The investment in 2022, has continued into 2023, with scoliosis/spina bifida again included as a priority area for funding.

Yours sincerely

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