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Re. 30573/23: To ask the Minister for Health the percentage of patients commencing radiotherapy treatment within 15 working days of being deemed ready to treat in each of the years 2012-2023, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Guirke,

The National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) collect key performance indicators (KPI) that measure time to treatment for radiation oncology as follows:

The proportion of patients completing radical radiation therapy (excluding palliative radiation therapy) that commenced treatment within 15 working days of being deemed ready to treat; target 90%.

The KPI is operational in nature and does not necessarily reflect tumour-specific category of risk. Patients are prioritised based on clinical need and processes are in place to maximise slot utilisation between centres.

Tabulated data for the above KPI is given as follows when summed across all hospitals that submit this treatment KPI to NCCP where it is noted that data prior to 2017 is not available on local record:

Radiation Oncology	Target	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
The number of patients who completed radical treatment for primary cancer	*	4,681	5,522	5,869	5,607	5,516	5,959
Timeline from ready to treat to date of first fraction was within 15 working days	90%	74.0%	83.4%	85.3%	83.2%	77.1%	71.4%

The data set is incomplete as figures for 2020-2021 include outsourcing of public patients to private facilities in the Dublin/Cork/Galway region to temper local capacity stresses and is therefore not included in these metrics. Additionally, 2021 radiation therapy activity and data were impacted by the cyberattack on the HSE in May/June of that year. Data for 2023 has not yet been included as it has not been validated.

Yours sincerely



Patrick Cafferty
Assistant National Director
National Cancer Control Programme