



9 April 2024

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Frankie Feighan

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Re: PQ 48915/23 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of paediatric hospitalisations in Ireland associated with chickenpox in 2022 and to date in 2023; the percentage increase, if any, in hospitalisation between both years; the economic impact of such hospitalisations in terms of bed nights on our public paediatric system; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Feighan

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

Please see below table for the number of cases, average Length of Stay and bed days for in-patient discharges aged <=15 years with a principal diagnosis of B01 *Varicella [chickenpox]*, reported to HIPE for Jan-Oct 2022 and Jan-Oct 2023.

Please note that the assignment of the **principal diagnosis B01 *Varicella [chickenpox]* on HIPE does not require laboratory confirmation of Varicella**. Therefore, the cases, average Length of Stay estimate and bed days are based on **both suspected and confirmed cases**.

Table 1: Number of cases, Average Length of Stay and bed days* for in-patient discharges aged <=15 years with a principal diagnosis of B01 *Varicella [chickenpox]*^a, reported to HIPE in the given time periods

Discharge Date	Cases	ALOS (days)	Bed Days
Jan-Dec 2022	92	2.5	228
Jan-Dec 2023	399	3.3	1297

***The assignment of the principal diagnosis B01 *Varicella [chickenpox]* on HIPE does not require laboratory confirmation of Varicella. Therefore, the figures in Table 1 are based on both suspected and confirmed cases.**

If you require any further information or clarification, please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Dr John Cuddihy

National Director of Public Health

MCRN: 16227