



**Galway
University
Hospitals**

Ospidéal na h-Ollscoile Gaillimh
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL GALWAY
MERLIN PARK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

General Manager's Office
University Hospital Galway
Newcastle Road
Galway
Tel: (091) 544200

16th October, 2023

REF: PQ 43013/23 *Updated 8th February, 2024*

RE: To ask the Minister for Health the current waiting time for people to be seen and treated at the pain clinic in Galway; the number of people, waiting for an appointment, by length of time/number of years on the waiting list, in tabular form; the number of people on the waiting list for pain relief in Galway who have an appointment date; the number still waiting for an appointment date; the reasons for a delay in four to five years in people receiving pain relief treatment in Galway and what steps are being taken to reduce the waiting times. -Noel Grealish

Dear Deputy Grealish,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you directly in the context of the request for information referenced above.

In response to your query, we have contacted the Waiting List office.

The following table outlines the waiting time for patients awaiting outpatient assessment (suspended patients are those that have been outsourced to the Private Sector):

Count of hospital name	Column Labels											
Row Labels	0-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	12-15 Months	15-18 Months	18-21 Months	21-24 Months	24-36 Months	36-48 Months	48+ Months	Grand Total
Has Appointment Date	12	1							26	33	2	74
No Appointment Date	129	132	103	99	68	78	65	51	82			807
Suspended									30	27	26	83
Grand Total	141	133	103	99	68	78	65	51	138	60	28	964

The following table outlines the waiting time for patients awaiting a procedure (predominantly an injection), (suspended patients are those that have been outsourced to the Private Sector):

Specialty	Pain Relief							
Count of Hospital Name	Column Labels							
Row Labels	0-3 Mths	3-6 Mths	6-9 Mths	9-12 Mths	12-15 Mths	15-18 Mths	Grand Total	
ACTIVE	214	266	181	230	42	2	935	
PREADMIT	4	5		2	34	1	46	
SUSPENSION	14	1		32	162	1	210	
Grand Total	232	272	181	264	238	4	1191	

There are a number of reasons why patients are waiting extended times for either outpatient assessment or treatment. Since Covid-19, capacity was significantly impacted as well as staffing challenges within the service.

The overall Outpatient waiting list has reduced by around 450 since the start of Covid-19 with the average waiting time continuing to reduce. The average waiting time for treatment is also reducing however the overall waiting list numbers remain significant as there are increasing numbers of additional outpatients being seen who are converting to treatments.

The Pain service has worked exceptionally hard to set up additional access in the private sector where this additional capacity is helping reduce both waiting times and numbers of patients waiting. GUH are also working through a programme of clinically validating all patients prior to booking these appointments.

Update 08/02/2024: Please note the data provided was compiled at the time of this request. This response was delayed as per Forsa Industrial Action.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Kane

General Manager

Galway University Hospitals