



Deputy Cathal Crowe  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

15<sup>th</sup> April 2025

***PQ 15570/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of leave before treatment completed patients who returned within 30 days of leaving hospital at hospitals (details supplied) in 2024; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Cathal Crowe***

***Details Supplied: Beaumont Hospital, St James' Hospital, St Vincent's Hospital, Galway University Hospital, Cork University Hospital and University Hospital Limerick***

Dear Deputy Crowe,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE Business Information Unit (BIU) is a central repository for activity information for Acute and Non Acute Services. The BIU collects, collates and validates extensive amounts of data which is used in performance monitoring and measurement to support the HSE in operational and strategic decisions.

The HSE currently reports the number of patients who registered yet decided not to wait within its Emergency Departments (EDs). Patients may choose to leave before triage, after triage or prior to a decision to admit or discharge home. The data does not distinguish or categorise patients that may require admission but left ED before admission or treatment.

The purpose of EDs is to deal with serious and unexpected illness and injury. EDs and their associated hospitals must clinically prioritise people who must be treated first, and those who may need to wait, or those who may need to attend a more appropriate care setting. To ensure this process is clinically safe for patients, Irish hospitals use the internationally tested Manchester Triage Tool which prioritises patients into a number of categories based on their clinical needs. Where a patient is seriously ill or injured, their needs will be prioritised above those with less serious conditions.

However, as demand inevitably overtakes capacity, prioritisation and consequential waiting may occur. In this regard, patients with less serious needs may choose to avail of alternative options. Many people, whose clinical needs could be more appropriately addressed by self-care, pharmacists, GPs, GP Out of Hours Services and Injury Units, continue to attend EDs. In Ireland, approximately 27% of those attending are actually admitted to hospital.

The BIU advised it cannot identify the number of leave before treatment completed patients who returned within 30 days of leaving hospital as this data is not collected. Therefore, the data is not available.

I trust this is of assistance to you.



Yours Sincerely,

**Nessa Lynch**  
**General Manager**  
**Access & Integration**