



Mr. David Cullinane, TD

29 April 2025

PQ 21559/25: To ask the Minister for Health the number of assaults recorded against staff at HSE facilities for quarter 1 for each year 2019-2024, inclusive, in tabular form – David Cullinane

Dear Deputy,

I refer to your recent Parliamentary Question which was sent to the HSE for response.

Please see below the report on HSE Assaults on Staff.

To assist with understanding the report/data more fully, I feel it appropriate to firstly give a brief background to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and to the data in the report. In 2015 the NIMS system was introduced by the SCA. This requires all incidents to be reported through a national centralised system and will ultimately improve the quality of the data. However, the HSE has long been proactive in encouraging staff to report all incidents, and this is enshrined in the Corporate Safety Statement, Violence and Aggression policy and Incident Management Framework and Guidance.

Please note that the following conditions apply to the data:

- All physical, verbal and sexual assaults on staff that have been reported on NIMS are included
- Assaults include a problem/cause of physical, verbal or sexual assault on staff in the HSE that occurred in each quarter 1 for each year 2019 to 2024
- The report was run by "Date of Incident", which is the date on which the incident occurred
- An incident can be a harmful Incident (Adverse Event), no harm incident, near miss, dangerous occurrence (reportable circumstance) or complaint
- Values between 1-5 have been redacted and are denoted by ~
- This report is correct as of 29/04/2025

When considering the figures in the report it should be noted that staff are encouraged to report all "near misses" and incidents – even those that **do not** result in harm. Hence, the number of incident reports should not be considered as indicative of a level of harm. There may also be multiple reports relating to the same incident.

Table 1. Incidents by Severity Rating for each quarter 1 for each year from 2019 to 2024

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
	Qtr1	Qtr1	Qtr1	Qtr1	Qtr1	Qtr1	
Severity Rating							
Major		~	~	~	~	~	15
Minor	252	305	200	235	212	257	1461
Moderate	83	87	68	74	103	90	505
Negligible	2337	2453	1710	2091	2349	2347	13287
Grand Total	2672	2846	1979	2405	2669	2697	15268

*Please note that this NIMS data may contain anomalies and is subject to further change following ongoing data analysis.

Severity Ratings:

- Negligible incidents accounted for 87% of incidents (2687)

Negligible is defined as adverse event leading to minor injury not requiring first aid. No impaired psychosocial functioning.

- Minor incidents accounted for 9.60% of incidents (1461)

Minor is defined as minor injury or illness, first aid treatment required < 3 days extended hospital stay Impaired psychosocial functioning greater than 3 days less than one month.

- Moderate incidents accounted for 3.30% of incidents (505)

Moderate is defined as significant injury requiring medical treatment e.g. Fracture and/or counselling. Agency reportable, e.g. HSA, Gardaí (violent and aggressive acts). >3 Days absence 3-8 days extended hospital stay. Impaired psychosocial functioning greater than one month and less than six months.

- Major incidents accounted for 0.10% of incidents (15)

Major is defined as major injuries/long term incapacity or disability (loss of limb) requiring medical treatment and/or counselling Impaired psychosocial functioning greater than six months.

- There were no extreme incidents reported

Extreme is defined as an incident leading to death or major permanent incapacity. Event which impacts on large number of service users or member of the public Permanent psychosocial functioning incapacity.

Comment

Due to delays in reporting numbers are likely to change overtime, however the organisation continues to encourage the reporting of all incidents (regardless of the level of harm, if any).

Ensuring the safety of employees and service users is a priority concern for the HSE. The HSE is committed to creating a safe environment within which to work or to be treated.

The organisation will continue to place an emphasis on the management of work-related aggression and violence to support the Organisation's strategy and policy. Key focus areas are:

- National policy on the management of work-related aggression and violence (policy review)
- Risk Assessment
- Training

I trust this is of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Mairéad Ryan
National HR