



Oifig Náisiúnta Sláinte Béal,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
An Pháirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta, Caladh an Treoigh, Luimneach
Teil: 061 492068

E: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie
National Oral Health Office

Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park, Castletroy, Limerick
Tel: 061 492068

Email: nationaloralhealth@hse.ie

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**Deputy Conor Sheehan
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 40995/25

To ask the Minister for Health the number of hospitalisations for children caused by tooth decay, broken down by hospital group, from 2014-2024, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Sheehan,

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

The HSE Community Dental Service provides emergency care, dental examinations and treatment to children up to the age of 16. The service also provides dental treatment directly to a range of adult patients with additional needs, with the majority of adult medical card holders being provided with access through the DTSS. A small proportion of children and adults with additional needs will be identified as being unable to accept dental care without the assistance of sedation.

The provision of dental treatment under General Anaesthetic (GA) is undertaken in hospital facilities with Anaesthesiology Clinicians providing the anaesthetic. It is often undertaken as a day case, with the patient being formally registered and provided with a hospital chart but discharged on the same day. Hospital admission is often understood as a patient being admitted to a ward within the hospital as an inpatient for one or more days. The patients who are scheduled for care under GA are provided with the treatment necessary to resolve or to manage a diagnosis. We do not hold data on hospital admissions specifically attributed to tooth decay.

Acute public hospitals contribute data through a system called HIPE (Hospital In-Patient Enquiry) which publishes a range of information based on in-patient and day patient discharges from hospitals participating in the data scheme. The data does not provide information from private hospitals. The specific data requested is not held within this dataset, the available HIPE data includes a table listing "Total Discharges: Principle procedure being dental services" by age group. It does not differentiate between local anaesthetic and general anaesthetic. The HIPE age bands are under 15 and over 15 years of age: The table below collates the age related data on dental services published annually.

Principal Procedure	Total
Dental services	<15 years of age
2015	3,908
2016	3,840
2017	3,524
2018	3,390
2019	3,232
2020	1,799
2021	2,205
2022	2,679
2023	2,856
2024	2,776

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but if you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

Anne O'Neill
Assistant National Director, Oral Health