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10th August 2025

Deputy O'Flynn
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 42659/25: To ask the Minister for Health the details of the gestation for all neonatal deaths in 2022 through termination of pregnancy under the 2018 Act, broken down in categories of less than 22 weeks, 22-27 weeks, 28-31 weeks, 32-36 weeks, 37-41 weeks, over 41 weeks; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 42667/25: To ask the Minister for Health the audits or reports that have been compiled including information on the care of babies born alive after abortion; and if she will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy O'Flynn,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position on the various areas and issues you raised.

Re. PQ 42659/25: Data on neonatal deaths following termination of pregnancy (TOP) under the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 is not collated by the HSE nationally in the format requested. Specifically, information is not available by gestational age categories of less than 22 weeks, 22–27 weeks, 28–31 weeks, 32–36 weeks, 37–41 weeks, or over 41 weeks.

However, since January 2019, the National Perinatal Epidemiology Centre (NPEC) has included limited information on perinatal deaths following termination of pregnancy in its annual Perinatal Mortality Audit Reports. These reports provide a national clinical overview of stillbirths and neonatal deaths, including those following termination of pregnancy, where the baby was delivered with a birthweight $\geq 500\text{g}$ and/or at a gestational age ≥ 24 weeks.

The most recent published report, covering 2020, recorded that 11% (n=39) of perinatal deaths were associated with termination of pregnancy, comprising 29 stillbirths and 10 neonatal deaths. The NPEC reports are publicly available at:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/npec/npec-clinical-audits/perinatalmortality/perinatalmortalityreportsandforms/>

The 2022 report which will be published soon break down below as requested.

- <22 weeks: 1
- 22–27 weeks: 9
- 28–31 weeks: 2
- 32–36 weeks: 0
- 37–41 weeks: 0

Re. PQ 42667/25: The HSE does not collate specific national audit data on the care of babies born alive after termination of pregnancy. All infants delivered with a diagnosis of a life-limiting condition, including those delivered following termination of pregnancy, are provided with comfort care in line with HSE guidance.

It is important to note that it is rare for a baby to be born alive following termination of pregnancy. As set out in the HSE's National Clinical Practice Guideline on Investigation and Management of Complications of Early Termination of Pregnancy, the chance of an ongoing pregnancy after the administration of both mifepristone and misoprostol is less than 3%. Where survival occurs, care is provided in accordance with best clinical practice and the infant's needs.

Again, the NPEC's Perinatal Mortality Audit Reports have included limited data on perinatal deaths following termination of pregnancy and all reports can be accessed online at the aforementioned link.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Davinia O'Donnell, General Manager, National Women and Infants Health Programme