



Ref: PQ 42823/25 & PQ 42824/25

16th September 2025

Deputy Pádraig Rice
Dáil Eireann
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Rice

I refer to your parliamentary questions below. Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in issuing a response.

PQ 42823/25 – To ask the Minister for Health the review process which governs suspension type from the Children's Health Ireland's spinal surgery waiting list (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Details Supplied: In June, 60 children were suspended from the spinal surgery waiting lists - 21 suspended for clinical reasons, 12 for personal, and 27 for surgery initiatives.

PQ 42824/25 – To ask the Minister for Health the processes in place to review and reactivate long-suspended children from Children's Health Ireland's spinal surgery waiting lists; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:

Patients are suspended from waiting lists according to the criteria dictated by the NTPF which Children's Health Ireland (CHI) adhere to. Every patient who is suspended on CHI's Spinal Surgery waiting list is reviewed by the Spinal Surgery Management Unit monthly to ensure there are valid reasons for patients to remain in this category. In line with NTPF guidelines, no patient can be suspended from a waiting list for longer than three months, at which time the family are contacted to ensure that any material factors are fully understood.

Decisions about the next steps for these patients are made as a collaboration between clinicians, patients and their families.

Patients whose status is reactivated from the suspended waiting list are managed according to NTPF guidelines.



As the NTPF outline, there are only three reasons why a patient may be suspended from a waiting list:

Clinical Suspension: Clinical suspensions are informed by clinical decisions and usually due to the patient not being ready to have their surgery/treatment at the time. Patients are suspended from the "active" list and then returned to the "active" list when they are ready for surgery.

Non-Clinical Suspensions: A patient may wish to postpone their surgery for a period of time for their own reasons. (e.g. exams/school or primary carer obligations).

Commissioning Initiatives: To support the management of patients who are having their surgery in another hospital through funded outsourcing, the patient should be moved from the "active" list to the "suspended" list.

Yours sincerely

Mr. David Moore

Clinical Lead for Spinal Services

Email: PADL@childrenshealthireland.ie