



Ref: PQ 10874/25

07<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Deputy David Cullinane**  
**Dáil Éireann**  
**Dublin 2**

Dear Deputy Cullinane

I refer to your parliamentary question below which has been forwarded to me for attention. Firstly, please accept my apologies for the delay in issuing a response.

**PQ 10874/25 – To ask the Minister for Health to address a matter reported in a media outlet (details supplied); if this report exists; if this report will be published; if the findings, as reported, are accurate; the steps which have been taken by Children's Health Ireland on the matter; the steps she has taken on the matter; and if she will make a statement on the matter.**

**Details supplied:** <https://www.ontheditch.com/nhs-consultant-report/>

#### **Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:**

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) and the National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh (NOHC) confirmed in July 2024 that it would undertake a joint clinical audit to look at a random and anonymised sample of DDH surgeries performed during the 2021-2023 period, after a concern was reported that the threshold criteria being used for surgical intervention in relation to DDH may have been different across CHI sites and NOHC. The audit is being conducted by a UK Paediatric Orthopaedic Consultant with specialist expertise in this area.

The audit is not yet complete, and so we cannot provide any details of its findings, and we cannot comment on any media reports in relation to the audit, as to do so would undermine the integrity of the audit process.

We will ensure our patients, and their families are kept informed as we move through this process, and will share findings of the audit once completed. In the meantime, we will be corresponding with families as appropriate.

CHI and NOHC are committed to improving access to quality care across our services and regularly undertakes quality assurance checks in line with HSE standards.

**Children's Health Ireland at Connolly | Crumlin | Tallaght | Temple Street**

**Our Mission** is to: Promote and provide child-centred, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We will do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

**CRA Registered Charity Number (RCN):** 20202295 **Revenue Charitable Status CHY:** 22235

**Board Members:** Prof James Browne (Chairman), Ms Mary Cryan, Ms Mary Donovan, Ms Catherine Guy, Dr Gavin Lavery, Ms Brigid McManus, Ms Eleanor O'Neill



### About DDH:

Developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) is a condition where the "ball and socket" joint of the hip does not properly form in babies and young children. Babies diagnosed with DDH early in life are usually treated with a fabric splint called a Pavlik harness. Surgery may be needed to correct the issue.

### About HSE Healthcare Audits:

A Healthcare Audit is a cornerstone of healthcare sector governance. Audits provide unbiased, objective assessments of whether the delivery of services are managed responsibly and effectively to achieve the intended results. These assessments help the health services and the HSE's Risk Committee achieve accountability and integrity, improve operations, instill confidence amongst stakeholders and assist with the creation of a safety culture.

[healthcare-audit-standards-2019.pdf \(hse.ie\)](#)

### Note on clinical Audits:

Clinical audits involve reviewing healthcare practices against agreed standards and then recommending changes or actions to address any gaps in meeting the standards, with the purpose of improving the quality of the service. They are guided by current international best practices.

Where an audit finds gaps between practice and the relevant standards, it usually makes recommendations that could be made to improve service quality at system level.

Yours sincerely

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