



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

National Health and Safety Function
Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit
Human Resources Directorate
School of Nursing
Dr. Steevens Hospital
Dublin 8

7th March 2025

Mr. David Cullinane
PQ 10920/25

Dear Mr Cullinane

I refer to your request for information detailed below;

PQ 10920/25 (Health) : To ask the Minister for Health the number of assaults recorded against staff at HSE facilities for each year from 2019 to 2024, and to date in 2025, inclusive, in tabular form. -David Cullinane

Background

With regard to the above request for information, please see below the report on Assaults on staff across all health facilities.

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 between 01/01/2019 and 07/03/2025.
- 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 07/03/2025.
- Excludes: Voluntary Organisations (FOI & PQ requests for voluntary organisations need to be sent directly to these statutory bodies).

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 year from 01/01/2019 – 07/03/2025

	2019 Total	2020 Total	2021 Total	2022 Total	2023 Total	2024 Total	2025 Total	Grand Total
Severity Rating								
Major	~	~	8	12	9	~		41
Minor	618	505	421	472	531	511	16	3074
Moderate	234	206	157	167	200	228	9	1201
Negligible	6027	4818	4302	4809	5557	5155	171	30839
Grand Total	6884	5531	4888	5460	6297	5899	196	35155

The majority of reported incidents were negligible, accounting for 87.72%. Moderate incidents were 3.42%, minor incidents were 8.74%, and major incidents constituted 0.12%. There were no reported extreme incidents.

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

Severity Ratings:

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

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 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 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.

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 will answer your request, however please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Katrina Dempsey

Head of the National Health and Safety Function