



Ref: PQ 11689/25

07th May 2025

Deputy Marie Sherlock
Dáil Eireann
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Sherlock

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 11689/25 – To ask the Minister for Health the status of the national audit for cleft services; the metrics used on the audit; if she will provide the results of the audit to Deputies; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Response:

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) can advise that the Dublin Cleft Centre (DCC) presents an audit of outcomes of primary cleft surgery at the annual All-Island of Ireland Cleft Audit Meeting, which takes place every November.

The following outcomes are reported: antenatal cleft diagnosis, time from referral to first review, speech, facial growth, nasolabial aesthetics, dental health and bone graft take. Annual results are compared to those reported in the UK and in Sweden.

Data is recorded in a prospectively-maintained clinical database, which has been in place for 25 years and is overseen by a full-time data manager.

It is the hope and intention of the DCC to prepare an annual report that can be shared publicly in the future but this is not the position at present with limited resources available. The DCC have previously been in communications with NOCA for their support, but the service is not large enough to warrant their support.

The DCC is actively exploring alternative methods in order to provide a national audit of the Cleft Services and aim to be in a position to provide this information to the public in the future.

Ms Catherine de Blacam, Consultant Plastic Surgeon and clinical lead Cleft Services in CHI would welcome a meeting for any further clarification or queries if required.

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

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann



Children's Health Ireland

Sláinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97 Ireland

Yours sincerely

Paul Harding
Directorate Operations Lead
Email: Paul.Harding@childrenshealthireland.ie

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