



Johnny Guirke TD
Sinn Féin
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

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13th May 2025

Re: PQ22179/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of people referred to urgent symptomatic breast disease clinics and non-urgent symptomatic breast disease clinics by age group (women under age 30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-49, 50-59, 60+), including the waiting time period per age group in each specific clinic, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Guirke,

Rapid Access Clinics (RACs) are in place in the eight designated cancer centres for people with suspected breast disease, with one associated centre for breast cancer in Letterkenny University Hospital. Women who present with signs and symptoms most suspicious of cancer are referred by their GP, based on the [national GP referral guideline](#), to the symptomatic breast disease (SBD) clinic for assessment. There is no age restriction on referral to the SBD clinic and referrals are triaged by clinicians. It is important to note that these are symptomatic patients being assessed for suspected cancer, the majority of whom will not be diagnosed with cancer.

National data for rapid access clinics (RACs) records first attendance of newly referred patients, not total number of referrals to the RAC. The data does not record the specific breakdown by age category. Recent national data on the total number of newly referred patients having first attendance at SBD clinics is outlined below, categorised into those triaged as urgent and those triaged as non-urgent:

Urgent Breast

The percentage of those seen at the cancer centre within the KPI timeframe of 10 working days of receipt of referral is as follows:

Month	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025
Total Urgent Patient Attendances	2,213	2,010	2,400
% attending within 10 working days	86%	84%	70%
% attending within 15 working days	91%	88%	77%
% attending within 20 working days	95%	90%	81%

Non-Urgent Breast

The percentage of those seen at the cancer centre within the KPI timeframe of 12 weeks of receipt of referral is as follows:

Month	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025
Total Non-Urgent Patient Attendances	1,482	1,549	1,568
% attending within 12 weeks	83%	74%	77%
% attending within 13 weeks	87%	80%	84%
% attending within 14 weeks	88%	81%	84%

Please note the following caveats when interpreting this data:

- The data is for those patients who have already attended. Since the data is retrospectively collected, NCCP cannot comment on those currently waiting to attend clinic.
- The KPI data on the individual hospitals is presented in the Management Data Report which is publicly available at www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/ and is the official source of hospital level data.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Bonas
Assistant National Director
National Cancer Control Programme