



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Náisiúnta
um Rochtain agus Imeascadh

Ospideal an Dr. Steevens
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Deputy Marie Sherlock
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

9th October 2025

PQ 52975/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of people who presented to accident and emergency departments, per level four hospital, where the presentation might have been more appropriate at another service, the number of presentations that were considered inappropriate for accident and emergency, in the year 2024 and to date in 2025, by number and percentage of total presentation, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Marie Sherlock

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The purpose of Emergency Departments (EDs) is to deal with serious and unexpected illness and injury. EDs operate 24/7 and often experience high volumes of persons presenting.

EDs and their associated hospitals must clinically prioritise those who must be treated first, and those who may need to wait, or those who may need to attend a more appropriate care setting. To ensure this process is clinically safe for patients, Irish hospitals use the internationally tested Manchester Triage Tool.

The Manchester Triage Tool prioritises patients into a number of categories based on their clinical needs. Where a patient is seriously ill or injured, their needs will be prioritised above those with less serious conditions. Ideally, hospitals would be in a position to treat patients on their arrival. However, as demand inevitably overtakes capacity, prioritisation and consequential waiting may occur. In this regard, some patients with less serious needs may choose to avail of alternative options. Many people, whose clinical needs could be more appropriately addressed by self-care, pharmacists, GPs, GP Out of Hours Services and Injury Units, continue to attend EDs.

Patients at ED are triaged on the basis of the above and not recorded as being an appropriate or inappropriate presentation. As such, the requested data cannot be provided.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Nessa Lynch
General Manager
Access and Integration