



Ref: PQ 57188/25

10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

**Deputy Peadar Tóibín**  
**Dáil Éireann**  
**Dublin 2**

Dear Deputy Tóibín

I refer to your parliamentary question below.

**PQ 57188/25 – To ask the Minister for Health the hospital sites at which vertebral body tethering (VBT) procedures have been carried out, including Children's Health Ireland (CHI) locations (Temple Street, Crumlin, Cappagh) and any external providers such as a clinic (Blackrock Clinic.) under the national outsourcing arrangements; the means by which follow-up, outcomes and complications relating to VBT have been recorded and monitored, given that hospital in-patient enquiry (HIPE) has no specific procedure code for VBT; the basis on which the HSE, CHI or the healthcare pricing office have been funding or coding VBT procedures in the absence of a designated HIPE code; and whether patient safety, audit and governance requirements can be met where a surgical technique is not identifiable in national activity, outcome or costing data; and if she will make a statement on the matter**

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

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) can advise that vertebral body tethering (VBT) procedures have been carried out in CHI at Crumlin and Temple Street. CHI has not outsourced any vertebral body tethering procedures to private facilities.

All patients who undergo surgery, with or without the use of implants, are followed up as deemed clinically appropriate to ensure that the clinical goals have been achieved. Fractures are followed until union has occurred and joint replacements until patients are at least six months after surgery. Paediatric spinal patients are followed at least until they achieve skeletal maturity and it is clear that no further treatment is planned.

With the introduction of the EPIC, the electronic health record system for the National Children's Hospital, all spinal patients who have had an implant will be followed up in the Spine Register ensuring sustainable, high-quality data collection and reporting into the future.

Medical, surgical and dental procedures performed in CHI are funded by CHI budget. There is no separate funding stream for VBT procedures.

#### **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:** Ms Mary Donovan, Ms Eleanor O'Neill, Ms Orla O'Brien, Dr Ruben Diaz, Mr Jim Frawley, Mr Joe Quinn, Dr Yvonne Traynor, Ms Anne Carrigy, Mr Tim Hynes, Mr Alan Seabourne

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

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**Mr. David Moore**

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