



Office of the Assistant National Director
Access and Integration

HSE Mental Health Services,
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Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúnta
Rochtain agus Comhtháthú: Seirbhísi
Meabhairshláinte FSS
Ospidéal Naomh Loman
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Deputy Catherine Ardagh.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

22nd September 2025

PQ Number: 45121/25

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health to provide details of the number of persons who have been involuntarily detained under the Mental Health Act 2001 in each of the past five years whose primary or secondary diagnosis was autism spectrum disorder and severe or profound intellectual disability; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Catherine Ardagh

Dear Deputy Ardagh

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The information requested is unavailable and has not been captured within the HSE dataset.

- The HSE does not routinely collect data on diagnosis where a person is involuntarily admitted under the Irish Mental Health Act 2001.
- However, a person with autism cannot be involuntarily admitted to an approved centre solely because of their autism.
- Involuntary admission is only permissible if the individual is diagnosed with a mental disorder that meets the Act's criteria for mental disorder, which includes the serious likelihood of immediate and significant harm to themselves or others, and they are unwilling to consent to voluntary admission.
- Autism, by itself, does not meet the definition of "mental disorder" under the Act, though individuals with autism may also have a co-occurring mental disorder that leads to involuntary admission.



I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

Tony McCusker
General Manager
Access and Integration; HSE Mental Health Services