

Motion re Unnecessary Hip Surgeries at Children's Health Ireland

That Dáil Éireann:

Notes with alarm the results of a clinical audit conducted on children's hip surgeries performed on children under the care of Children's Health Ireland, which:

- Audited 147 cases across 14 surgeons across 3 institutions for the period 2021 to 2023, namely Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, and National Orthopaedic Hospital Cappagh;
- Found that, of those audited, 60% of the surgeries at Temple Street were not indicated, 79% at Cappagh were not indicated, and 2% at Crumlin were not indicated;

Further notes that:

- Not all of these surgeries were conducted through the public system, but that many were conducted privately with even less oversight of care;
- Many parents sought second opinions and that there are cases where the second opinion considered that not only did the child not require surgery, but that the diagnosis was incorrect;
- This malpractice has occurred under the watch of several Ministers for Health, who have failed to properly oversee the effective delivery of children's healthcare in this State and have instead operated at arm's length;
- A final report into this matter has yet to be completed nor published.

Considers that a surgery conducted in circumstances where it is not clinically indicated according to best practice standards is an unnecessary surgery;

Acknowledges that any surgery can be a traumatic experience for a child and their parents;

Recognises that potentially tens of thousands of hip surgeries have been conducted at these institutions over the last decade, and that parents of children who had these surgeries are left in the dark and wondering whether their child suffered an unnecessary surgery;

Condemns the fact that there was no disclosure of these concerns and incidents despite the Minister for Health being made aware as far back as May 2024 and until the publication of the clinical audit by the Ditch media outlet, and that these concerns were kept hidden from parents and Dáil Éireann;

Further recognises that these revelations come at the same time as the completion of HIQA's investigation into the use of non-medical grade implants in several children, which found severe governance and institutional failures at Children's Health Ireland;

Calls on the Government to:

- Conduct an extensive review of orthopaedic surgical practice at Children's Health Ireland to uncover the extent of unnecessary surgeries on children, and to determine why these surgeries were conducted and whether a profit motive was involved in any of these cases;

- Provide certainty to all parents of children who have had orthopaedic surgical practice at Children's Health Ireland
- Hold those responsible for these failures to account, at an individual, organisational, and political level.
- Ensure that as we transition into the new Childrens Hospital that it provides the best quality care with the highest standards of governance, management, ethics, open disclosure and communication between families and medics

David Cullinane, Aengus Ó Snodaigh, Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire, Matt Carthy, Cathy Bennett, John Brady, Pat Buckley, Joanna Byrne, Sorca Clarke, Rose Conway-Walsh, Réada Cronin, Seán Crowe, Pa Daly, Máire Devine, Pearse Doherty, Paul Donnelly, Dessie Ellis, Mairéad Farrell, Thomas Gould, Ann Graves, Johnny Guirke, Martin Kenny, Claire Kerrane, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, Mary Lou McDonald, Denise Mitchell, Donna McGettigan, Conor McGuinness, Johnny Mythen, Natasha Newsome Drennan, Shona Ní Raghallaigh, Eoin Ó Broin, Louis O' Hara, Ruairi Ó Murchú, Fionntáin Ó Suilleabháin, Louise O'Reilly, Darren O'Rourke, Maurice Quinlivan, Mark Ward