



11<sup>th</sup> December 2023

PQ Ref: PQ 52231/23

Dear Deputy Smyth,

*PQ details: To ask the Minister for Health if his Department is seeing an increase in reports of rodents, mainly rats, causing concerns for health in towns and villages nationwide; what his Department is doing with other Departments to combat this problem; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

I wish to acknowledge your email in relation to the above matter.

The National Environmental Health Service, which includes the HSE's Pest Control Service in Dublin City and County, has not seen an increase in reports of rodents (rats and mice), between 2022 and 2023. This relates to the situation in Dublin.

The following sets out the service provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and responsibilities for rodent control;

The National Environmental Health Service of the HSE provides a free treatment service on request, to members of the public for the treatment of rats in private residences in Dublin City and County, with some exceptions. For example, we do not provide a treatment service to commercial premises or privately rented accommodation.

This service is provided to owner occupiers and to local authority tenants.

Treatment for mice is provided free to the public in certain, limited circumstances, on a case by case basis.

The provision of this free treatment service for rodents is not a statutory function of the HSE.

The Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919 (as amended by the Health Acts 1947 to 2004) places responsibilities on the occupier/owner of land to eliminate rodents from their property and to take appropriate action to prevent their property from becoming infested with rats and mice.

Accordingly, responsibility for the control of rodents in main drains rests with Uisce Eireann.



Responsibility in relation to rodents reported on Council property, including unoccupied Council houses, communal areas, grass verges and similar, lies with the relevant Council. Council's also have certain responsibilities as landlords of occupied Council homes, including in relation to rodent control.

During investigation of complaints, the National Environmental Health Service, which includes the HSE's Pest Control Service in Dublin City and County, frequently liaises with other responsible agencies, where appropriate.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara Woods".

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Tara Uí Chaoilte,

Príomhoifigeach Sláinte Comhshaoil Réigiúnach

Tara Woods

Regional Chief Environmental Health Officer