



Príomhoifigeach Faisnéise

Teicneolaíocht agus Claochlú
FSS, Ospidéal Dr Steevens,
Baile Átha Cliath 8, D08 W2A8

Chief Information Officer

Technology and Transformation,
HSE, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin
8, D08 W2A8

www.hse.ie

ehealthireland.ie
[@hselive](https://twitter.com/hselive)

t 01 635 2732

26th July 2024

Mr Jim O'Callaghan TD
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re: PQ ref 32249/24

“To ask the Minister for Health how many people have now been provided with individual health identifier numbers in accordance with the Health Identifiers Act 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy O'Callaghan,

The individual Health Identifier (IHI) ensures that each person is uniquely identified and that their health records are securely and accurately linked to them, thereby reducing the risk of errors and improving the coordination of care across various healthcare services and providers.

As per the Health Identifiers Act 2014, the HSE's Health Identifiers Service has responsibility for operating and maintaining the integrity and protecting the IHI for the HSE as delegated by the Minister for Health.

The IHI register was created in 2015 and populated with 4.7 million IHI records for known members of the population in accordance with the Health Identifiers Act 2014. As of July 2024, a total of 5.9 million individuals have been assigned their unique Individual Health Identifier (IHI) number, inclusive of individuals who have passed away or who are no longer resident in the state.

IHIs have been populated into all of the GP Practice Management Systems, 41 hospitals (with an ongoing programme to integrate the remaining hospitals including voluntary hospitals), National Screening Services (NSS), the National Immunisations Service's (NIO) vaccination systems and the Primary Care Reimbursement Services (PCRS) for Medical Card Holders and the Drugs Payment and Long Term illness schemes.



The IHI is a critical enabler of the strategic objectives outlined in the recently launched *"Digital for Care - A Digital Health Framework for Ireland 2024 - 2030."* This framework highlights the importance of robust digital identities to support the transformation of Ireland's health information system into one that is integrated, patient-centred and fit for purpose. The IHI is foundational in achieving this vision, enabling seamless integration of patient data across digital health systems.

The deployment of the HSE App later this year will utilise the IHI to safely connect patients with their appointments, vaccination records, medical cards and other healthcare information. Additionally, the HSE App will enable citizens to see their IHI, which will be available for scanning into compatible technical systems, fast tracking identification for those attending for health services. Furthermore, the forthcoming Shared Care Digital Record will rely on the IHI to connect healthcare information into a central record, ensuring comprehensive and coordinated care for all patients and access for them to their health care records.

The Department of Health, along with the HSE's Health Identifiers Service, is committed to continuing the roll-out and optimisation of IHIs, ensuring they are effectively integrated into all relevant health information systems. This commitment is part of our broader aim to build a seamless, safe, and secure digital health ecosystem in Ireland, as outlined in the Digital Health Framework, enabling better health outcomes for all citizens.

If you feel that the question has not been fully answered or you require any further clarity, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Fran Thompson'.

Fran Thompson,
Chief Information Officer, Technology and Transformation, HSE.