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13th May 2024

Deputy Mark Ward
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 20527/24 – To ask the Minister for Health the number of athletes in sports who died by sudden arrhythmic death syndrome from 2019 to the latest date in 2024, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

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.

Hospital In-Patient Enquiry (HIPE) is a health information system, managed by the Healthcare Pricing Office (HPO) of HSE Finance and is designed to collect clinical and administrative data on discharges from, and deaths in, acute public hospitals in Ireland. HIPE discharges are clinically coded from charts in the hospitals, this includes translating medical terminology into alpha-numeric code and using the entire chart to extract the conditions and procedures to create an adequate picture of the patient's healthcare encounter.

HIPE colleagues have advised that a specific diagnosis code for sudden arrhythmic death syndrome is not coded. There is a general code for cardiac arrhythmia but this would not be specific to the requested information.

Further, HIPE does not automatically capture the activity for this condition so are unable to state if any deaths were sports-related.

I trust this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Lynch
General Manager
Acute Operations