

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY SENATOR S.C. FERGUSON
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 5th JULY 2011**

Question

Will the Minister state

- a) how many of the Datex incident reports completed in the last 4 years refer to the work of the 32 locum doctors employed to undertake the work of the 4 doctors in the Division of Surgery whose duties are currently restricted?
- b) The number of Serious Untoward Incident investigations during this period which have investigated the work of any of the 32 locum doctors?

Answer

- a) DATIX is a software system used to capture information about 'incidents' that take place across hospital services and in the community. These 'incidents' cover a broad spectrum of events from an error in clinical practice to a slip or trip or a potentially faulty heating system. The DATIX system is also used to capture some elements of clinical data, for example HSSD's caesarean section rates.

The reporting of 'incidents' - regardless of whether they relate to clinical practice or a faulty switch - is fundamental to improved patient safety and, in the words of Verita, is the "sign of a strong organisation". Verita acknowledges that HSSD has invested significant effort in creating and maintaining a culture of openness in which professionals can acknowledge their own limitations, raise concerns about the practice of colleagues or flag up sundry issues and concerns.

Over the 4 year period, 2008 to 2011, there was a total 12,070 DATIX reports across all hospital and community services of which 31 related to the 32 locum doctors (approx to 0.25%).

- b) There have been no SUI investigations relating to the 32 locums.