

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2010**

**Question**

“Would the Minister advise Members -

- i) of the 7 children (out of 174 cycle-related incidents in 2009) who were admitted to hospital, all of them as a result of an off-road bicycle accident, the type and severity of the injuries which led to their admission.
- ii) the full numbers of different types of Road Traffic Accident (car, motorcycle, pedal cycle pedestrian etc.) affecting children over the last 5 years; how many were admitted to hospital as a result of these incidents in each category, and the type and severity of the injuries which led to their admission.

Would the Minister advise members exactly how injuries and causes of incidents are logged at the Accident and Emergency Department?

Would the Minister further advise members the systems in place to log head and neck injuries by type, cause, severity and outcome?

**Answer**

The structure and limitations of the current computer system within the Accident and Emergency Department only allows the provision of basic activity related information and does not allow the retrieval of information on the severity of injuries to patients seen in the Department without a manual trawl of individual admission cards. There are approximately 40,000 Accident and Emergency attendances per year which makes the retrieval of detailed information extremely difficult and time consuming.

There were 174 child bicycle related Accident and Emergency attendances in 2009. Out of this number 15 were classified as road traffic accidents related to pedal bikes with no related hospital admissions. It is important to understand that the report that Deputy of St Mary refers to in his opening question is based on information sorted under all bicycle accidents for children in 2009. However, his second question asks for figures sorted under road traffic accidents. The majority of bicycle related accidents occur off road. As a consequence, the answer to question ii) only relates to 15 pedal bike attendances out of 174 child bicycle related attendances in 2009.

The data set out in the attached table was compiled from the Accident and Emergency data base and covers in broad terms road traffic related attendances of children up to the age of 16 to the Department and subsequent inpatient admissions (following their first attendance in the Accident and Emergency Department ) for the period 2005 to 2009 inclusive.

Within the Accident and Emergency Department, patient details and their presenting injuries are logged and coded (in fairly basic terms) on the Department’s computer system. The injury codes are further refined with the input of a diagnostic code when the patient is discharged from the Department. There is a separate facility for road traffic accidents which allows entry of limited information on the mechanism or potential cause of injury but does not allow retrieval of information concerning the severity of outcomes as previously mentioned.

Consistent with the majority of other injuries the computer system in the Accident and Emergency Department allows the logging of sub divisions of head and neck injuries under very broad headings, including how the injury occurred, but not the severity or the ultimate outcome.

**Road Traffic Accident Attendances to the A&E Department and Subsequent In-patient Admissions 2005 to 2009**

|             | <b>Car</b> | <b>Car related Hospital admissions</b> | <b>Motorbike</b> | <b>Motorbike related Hospital admissions</b> | <b>Pedal bike</b> | <b>Pedal bike related Hospital admissions</b> | <b>Bus</b> | <b>Bus relat Hospital admissio</b> |
|-------------|------------|--|------------------|--|-------------------|---|------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>2009</b> | 31         | 3                                      | 36               | 4  | 15                | 0   | 0          | 0                                  |
| <b>2008</b> | 18         | 3                                      | 49               | 6  | 13                | 1   | 1          | 0                                  |
| <b>2007</b> | 10         | 1                                      | 40               | 5  | 17                | 3   | 1          | 0                                  |
| <b>2006</b> | 36         | 1                                      | 44               | 7  | 8                 | 1   | 1          | 1                                  |
| <b>2005</b> | 29         | 0                                      | 38               | 4  | 27                | 0   | 2          | 0                                  |

