

*Dé Máirt, 27 Samhain, 2007  
Tuesday, 27th November, 2007*

2.30 p.m.

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**GNÓ COMHALTAÍ PRÍOBHÁIDEACHA  
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

*Fógra i dtaobh leasú ar Thairsceint : Notice of Amendment to Motion*

22. “That Dáil Éireann,

- expressing its serious concerns about disclosures of major failures in cancer care services at the Midlands General Hospital, Portlaoise, including the failure to diagnose breast cancer in nine women who had presented for mammograms and the recall of a further 97 women who had undergone ultrasound scans at the hospital;
- deploring the way in which the women have been treated subsequent to these disclosures, including the failure to provide adequate counselling for those who have had to undergo surgery and the fact that women who had undergone scans first heard on news bulletins that they might be recalled;
- noting that concern had previously been expressed about the adequacy of equipment and facilities at Portlaoise;
- condemning the failure of the Department of Health and Children and the HSE to ensure the provision of cancer screening and treatment services in which the public can have full confidence;
- urging the public, notwithstanding these alarming failures to continue to present for screening and assessment;
- noting that the HSE was the creation of Minister for Health and Children, Deputy Mary Harney and that it has failed to deliver the improvements promised in the health service; and
- believing in the principle of political accountability for such shocking failures in our health system;

has no confidence in the Minister for Health and Children, Deputy Mary Harney.” — *Jan O’Sullivan, Eamon Gilmore, Joan Burton, Emmet Stagg, Thomas P. Broughan, Joe Costello, Michael D. Higgins, Brendan Howlin, Kathleen Lynch, Ciarán Lynch, Liz McManus, Brian O’Shea, Willie Penrose, Ruairi Quinn, Pat Rabbitte, Seán Sherlock, Róisín Shortall, Joanna Tuffy, Mary Upton, Jack Wall.*

*Leasú:*

*Amendment:*

1. To delete all the words after “Dáil Eireann” and substitute the following:

- “— expresses its sympathy and regret to the women who were patients at the Midland Regional Hospital at Portlaoise and their families, who were affected by errors of misdiagnosis and miscommunication;
- deeply regrets, most particularly, that a review of diagnoses became necessary;
- expresses its confidence in the efficiency and high quality of the work carried out in the review of mammograms and at the special clinic at Portlaoise by leading clinicians, supported by specialist nurses and other health service staff;
- approves the actions of the Minister for Health and Children in ensuring that the special clinic was put in place immediately last weekend;
- acknowledges the leadership shown by the Minister for Health and Children in setting a clear direction in the National Strategy for Cancer Control for the development of quality assured cancer control services as the best way of ensuring that the risk of such events is minimised in the future; and
- supports the Minister for Health and Children in her commitment to ensuring equitable access to high quality cancer services for patients throughout the country;

in particular, Dáil Éireann acknowledges:

- the Minister’s approval of National Quality Standards for Symptomatic Breast Disease Services under the Health Act 2007 to ensure that every woman in Ireland who develops breast cancer has an equal opportunity to be managed in a centre which is capable of delivering the best possible outcome;
- the significant progress made to date by the HSE in reorganising breast cancer services in order to comply with the National Quality Assurance Standards for Symptomatic Breast Disease, including the recent decision by the HSE to cease breast cancer services at a number of hospitals with very low case volumes;
- the plans over the next two years to provide breast cancer services in line with the development of quality assured capacity in the eight designated cancer centres;
- that cancer survival is improving in Ireland for all of the major cancers and that relative survival for breast cancer improved from 72.9% (for people diagnosed between 1994-1997) to 78.2% (for people diagnosed between 1998 to 2001) in line with improvements that have been seen in other developed countries;
- the establishment by the Minister of a National Cancer Screening Service Board and the commencement last month of the BreastCheck screening process in the South and West;
- the appointment by the HSE last week of Prof. Tom Keane to lead and manage the establishment of the National Cancer Control Programme to implement the National Strategy for Cancer Control;
- the additional investment of over €1 billion in cancer control since 1997; and
- that the National Development Plan 2007-2013 includes major investment in the implementation of the Cancer Control Strategy, including state of the art diagnostic and treatment facilities.” — *An tAire Sláinte agus Leanaí*.