

PRESS RELEASE

LOW FALLS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF MAJOR TRAUMA IN IRELAND

6th February 2019 Mr Kenneth Mealy, RCSI President, officially launched the NOCA Major Trauma Audit National Report 2017 at the NOCA Annual Conference held today in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

The Major Trauma Audit (MTA) National Report focuses on the most severely injured patients in the Irish healthcare system. It presents data from 5,061 patients across 26 trauma receiving hospitals in Ireland. This represents 86% of all major trauma patients in 2017.

KEY FINDINGS

- The majority of major trauma in Ireland is caused by a low fall of less than 2 metres (57%).
- One in two patients sustained their injury in their own home, 77% of which were 'low falls'.
- The mean age of major trauma patients was 58 years.
- 21% of patients required transfer to another hospital for ongoing care. Many patients in the Irish setting continue to be brought to hospitals that do not have the services on site to manage their injuries.
- MTA highlights that 44% of major trauma is sustained in patients over the age of 65 years. Older major trauma patients have more complex medical needs. This report shows that they do not receive the same level of response as younger patients with the same severity of injury and have considerably worse outcomes.
- 58% of patients arrived to the Emergency Department between 4pm and 8am outside of 'normal working hours'.
- Only 60% of major trauma patients were discharged directly home following their hospital admission.

Dr Conor Deasy, Clinical Lead for Major Trauma Audit commented "this report tells us that our homes are dangerous places, especially for older people. We need to address the epidemic of low falls in the home through engineering, medical and societal approaches. We have NCTs to ensure car and road user safety; should we have something similar for our homes given the burden of injury associated?"

NOCA was established in 2012 to create sustainable clinical audit programmes at national level. NOCA enables those who manage and deliver healthcare to improve the quality of care through national clinical audit. NOCA is funded by the Health Service Executive Quality Improvement Division, governed by an independent voluntary board and operationally supported by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

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Copies of the report will be available to download from www.noca.ie/publications

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