

ATTENTION: REVIEW GROUP

When I came across Department of Health's appeal for views on separation of private practice from public acute hospitals, I wondered is this really for real?? Who created the shambles in the first place - the Department of Health and former and current Ministers for Health!

The bulk of the problem exists because of the practice of TURNING PUBLIC PATIENTS INTO (SUPPOSEDLY) PRIVATE PATIENTS after they have entered the Hospitals as public patients by Ambulance, and are then asked to sign forms to waive their right to be treated as public patients. This is done by direction of the Department of Health - in my view a totally immoral practice. In actual fact, in most instances, these patients remain in the public wards, and are treated no differently than those who do not have private health insurance. Of course these 'private patients' have also served their time on the trolleys, before being invited to become private patients.

Has a survey been done on how many Private Patients have entered the Public Hospitals by appointment for elective procedures? Not very many I reckon. These patients have arrived at A&E Departments and are not there by appointment - very few private patients are admitted to Public Hospitals by appointment.

A second issue is the failure of successive Governments and Ministers for Health to take on some of the Consultants who abuse the system. I am presently aware of two friends who attend Consultants privately, but are then attending the Public Hospital for tests - and when one offered her private health insurance details at reception, was advised that she was in a Public Hospital and that there was no charge. Another friend had an accident at work and was referred to Public Hospital by GP. He attended public clinics 4 times, offered to pay by cheque as employer would be reimbursing him - the Consultant, on duty in the Public Hospital, suggested that he should claim from both health insurer and employer (!) - and then asked that cheque be sent to him at his private clinic at another address!!!

I would appreciate a reply.

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