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## **IAEM seriously concerned at official responses to the Tallaght trolley wait controversy**

The Irish Association for Emergency Medicine views with serious concern official responses to the well-publicised case of an unfortunate patient who waited on a trolley for 29 hours on a corridor in Tallaght Hospital's Emergency Department before being admitted to a hospital bed.

Dr. James Gray, Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Tallaght Hospital wrote to the hospital's CEO highlighting the plight of this particular patient. For this he should be commended. Was the response of Tallaght Hospital to thank him and give reassurance that in future no patient would remain on a trolley for a prolonged period?

**No** - it was to set up an 'investigation' to ascertain how the issue entered the public domain! In such circumstances, it is difficult not to see the hospital's action as an attempt to silence those advocating on behalf of patients.

It is also astonishing that politicians, particularly the Taoiseach, would express surprise that a patient might be on a trolley for such an extended period of time. By now they know, or should know, that patients of all ages suffer this fate on a daily basis; the unacceptable has become a "normal" part of the hospital system.

As the representative organisation for doctors working in the country's Emergency Departments, IAEM fully supports its members in ensuring that significant patient risks are brought to the attention of those with responsibility for having them addressed. We say this to Tallaght Hospital, the HSE and the politicians: Heed the message; don't shoot the messenger.

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