

## **Clinical Indications for Lumbar Spine Radiographs:**

Lumbar spine x-rays involve a significant radiation dose (approximately 70 chest x-rays).

The relevant literature suggests that lumbar spine x-rays are not routinely indicated for uncomplicated back pain which resolves in about 90% within 2 months regardless of treatment.

### ***Appropriate indications include:***

- Significant trauma (**not** “lifting something”, “bending to pick up something” etc).
- Age <20, >50.
- Associated fever/systemic symptoms.
- Known background malignancy, previous spinal infection or osteoporosis.
- Chronic corticosteroid use / IV drug use / alcohol abuse.
- Associated motor deficit.
- History of ankylosing spondylitis.
- Episode of back pain ongoing for 6 weeks or longer without improvement.

### ***Mission Statement***

*Sligo University Hospital is committed to the delivery of a high quality, patient centred service in a safe, equitable and efficient manner.  
We recognise and value the contribution of each staff member and endeavour to support them in their ongoing development.*