



General Manager's Office  
University Hospital Waterford,  
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South/South West Hospital Group  
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24<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Mr Brendan Howlin D  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 16310 To ask the Minister for Health the rheumatology services available for persons in County Wexford; if he is satisfied that there is adequate community rheumatology cover to deal with the demand in the county; his views on whether there is a threat to the rheumatology services being provided for the county at Waterford Regional Hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Howlin,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Rheumatology Services at University Hospital Waterford (UHW) receives referrals from GPs in the five counties of Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and South Tipperary. An analysis undertaken in July 2018 indicated that 29% of our referrals (409 out of 1396) came from GPs in Wexford County/Town.

The current Rheumatology Service in University Hospital Waterford is not resourced to meet the current demand in terms of the total volume of referrals received and the ongoing care required for Rheumatology patients.

There is no specialist Rheumatology service in the Primary Care setting in Wexford. The Consultant Rheumatologists in UHW can refer patients to the Physiotherapists in the Primary Care Centres but there is no Occupational Therapy Service to refer to.

I trust the above is satisfactory but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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**Grace Rothwell**  
**General Manager**  
**University Hospital Waterford**  
**Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital**