

PQ Rep IEHG
Email: pqrep@iehg.ie

10th December 2019

Deputy Sean Fleming T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2
E: sean.fleming@oireachtas.ie

Re: PQ 47481/19 – Removal of Services, RHM

“To ask the Minister for Health the discussions or consideration given to remove services from a hospital (details supplied); if consideration is being given to outsourcing the service; if a role for the national treatment purchase fund is being considered in relation to the matter; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

***Certain skin pathology samples from patients at Mullingar Hospital regarding outsourcing these for diagnosis and is the Minister concerned at segregating tissue samples which could pose a clinical risk for patients.*”**

Dear Deputy Fleming,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question seeking an update on discussions to remove services and outsourcing of certain skin pathology in the Regional Hospital Mullingar, which has been referred to the Ireland East Hospital Group for direct response.

I have had this matter examined and am advised that the Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG), in conjunction with the Regional Hospital in Mullingar and the Mater Hospital have recently put in place a comprehensive and sustainable model of dermatology care for the Region. This service has been funded through NTPF and no fee per item is payable to pathologists.

This hub and spoke model of care for Dermatology has three consultant dermatologists appointed to the Mater Hospital, each with a 10-hour sessional commitment to Mullingar. The consultants will deliver outpatient clinics in Mullingar with any patient requiring admission being referred to the Mater Hospital.

The plan has also factored in the care of patients with suspected /diagnosed melanomas – all such patients will be managed by the Multi-disciplinary Team in the Mater where they will receive any ongoing systemic treatment/care.

To put in place the appropriate governance and access to laboratory results between both sites we have agreed that any pathology for this service only will be sent to the Mater Hospital (similarly any dermatology patient requiring plastic surgery will also be managed in the Mater).



Mary Day, Chief Executive /
Thomas Lynch, Chairman Tel: 01-9602360

Ireland East Hospital Group
C/O Mater Misericordiae University
Hospital
Eccles Street
Dublin 7
D07 R2WY

The plan has also factored in the care of patients with suspected /diagnosed melanomas – all such patients will be managed by the Multi-disciplinary Team in the Mater where they will receive ongoing systemic treatment/care, which is deemed safe clinical practice.

It is acknowledged that histopathology in the Midlands has traditionally been (and continues to be) managed by the Regional Hospital in Tullamore – this dermatology initiative will not in any way impact this ongoing arrangement nor add to the workload of the pathology services in Tullamore.

There has been no dermatology service in Mullingar since February of last year and it is only with the approval of the NTPF that we have finally been able to put in place a sustainable plan for these patients.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



Paul Gallagher
Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery



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