

General Manager's Office
University Hospital Waterford,
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilkenny
South/South West Hospital Group
Email: uhwpg@hse.ie

14th May 2020

Mr David Cullinane TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 4787 - To ask the Minister for Health the plans put in place by University Hospital Waterford to deal with Covid-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane

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.

I can confirm that University Hospital Waterford established a Crisis Management Team (comprising of Management and Clinicians) to agree, implement and oversee a comprehensive range of measures to address the Covid-19 pandemic. These measures include but are not limited to the following:

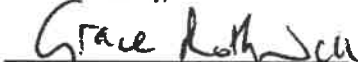
- 1) Visiting and access restrictions to reduce 'traffic' in the acute hospital setting.
- 2) All inpatient and outpatient appointments have reduced with only urgent and time critical patients attending the hospital for outpatient and inpatient elective activity
- 3) The introduction of streaming in the Emergency Department and the establishment of a Covid and a Non-Covid Emergency Department
- 4) Bespoke pathways and arrangements for specialties including Maternity, Paediatrics, Dialysis, Radiology and Rapid Access Cancer Services
- 5) The relocation offsite of a number of services including the Haematology/Oncology Inpatient Ward and Day Ward to UPMC Whitfield and a Step-down Ward at Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital Kilkenny
- 6) A number of wards in the main hospital have closed/reduced in size to enable the opening of wards comprising single en-suite rooms to enable isolation of all suspect Covid 19 patients
- 7) A number of departments in the hospital have introduced revised working arrangements to enable staff flexibility and provide a 7 day service e.g. Pharmacy, Cardiac Diagnostics, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy
- 8) The opening of additional critical care beds and the up-skilling of a significant number of UHW and Kilcreene staff to be prepared for the expected surge in critical care activity
- 9) The purchase of a range of new and supplementary equipment and P.P.E.
- 10) The introduction of robust cleaning regimes across the hospital with particular emphasis on the Dunmore Wing, Critical Care, Paediatrics, Dialysis and the Emergency Departments.

- 11) The introduction of ward based medical teams to reduce movement across wards but equally to provide specialist support to dedicated wards e.g. assignment of Respiratory Physicians to the Pine and Cedar Wards in the Dunmore Wing
- 12) Agreement with community colleagues to utilise the Palliative Care floors in the Dunmore Wing for the duration of the Pandemic
- 13) The provision of a Radiography Service in Dungarvan for GPs
- 14) A significantly expanded laboratory testing service with the ability to undertake circa 1,000 samples daily Monday – Sunday
- 15) The establishment of a Staff POD to enable rapid testing of any staff member that develops symptoms. Turnaround on test results is within 24 hours for all staff members tested
- 16) The introduction of a Contact Tracing Rota with Contact Tracing being undertaken by the General Manager, Operations Manager and Director of Nursing on a rota basis over 7 days
- 17) The Crisis Management Team continues to meet twice daily with meetings at 7.30am and 3.30pm Monday to Friday and with a wider Stakeholder Meeting daily Monday to Friday at 11.30am and at 2pm at weekends.
- 18) 7 day on site presence by Senior Management
- 19) A significant quantity of signage/notices have been designed and introduced throughout the hospital to ensure ongoing awareness of Covid-19
- 20) Participation in the SSWHG Teleconference at 6pm daily

University Hospital Waterford is confident that the measures introduced enables a strong oversight and management of this unprecedented period in Irish healthcare with no hospital acquired cases to date and with < 15 positive staff members period to date. Hospital Management acknowledge the teamwork and co-operation of all staff in following the guidance provided and supporting the decisions made by the Crisis Management Team. University Hospital Waterford also acknowledges and thanks the general public for complying with the required measures.

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

Yours sincerely,



Grace Rothwell
General Manager
University Hospital Waterford
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital