

CC/WOD/MC

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05th May 2021

Mr Willie O'Dea TD,
Dàil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

*** PQ 18944/21: To ask the Minister for Health if the proposed new development of 96 bed units at University Hospital Limerick will result in a net overall increase of 96 beds for UHL; the number of additional staff that will be provided to operate the new unit; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Willie O'Dea**

Dear Deputy O'Dea,

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.

Final planning permission for the 96-bed ward block was granted at the end of February 2021, and the HSE Capital Plan for 2021 provides funding for the detailed design work for the project to be progressed. The new four-storey building, will be located over the hospital's current Emergency Department and, subject to approval, will take a number of years to complete. As we are currently in the early stages of this important project, it is not possible to outline the number of additional staff that will be provided to support this unit.

It is envisaged that when the new 96-bed block opens, approximately half of the beds will be used to replace older bed stock on the UHL site. This stems from a long-identified need to move away from nightingale wards to single en-suite rooms in hospitals due to cross-infection issues. The rationale has become more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic that has made such a significant impact on all aspects of healthcare provision in Irish hospitals.

I trust this clarifies the position, please contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



Colette Cowan
Chief Executive Officer
UL Hospitals Group