

CC/ROD/MC

01st February 2021

Mr Richard O'Donoghue,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 1667/21

To ask the Minister for Health the position regarding wait times for MRI scans at University Hospital Limerick; if funding will be secured for an additional MRI scanner for University Hospital, Limerick; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Richard O'Donoghue

Dear Deputy O'Donoghue,

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.

Plans are currently underway for the future development of the Radiology Department at University Hospital Limerick. These plans are currently at the design stage and include provision for an additional MRI scanner.

There is a second MRI scanner in operation at University Hospital Limerick through a managed service, this has resulted in approximately 4,500 additional MRI scans taking place every year. This service commenced at University Hospital Limerick on December 30th 2019 and is operated by Alliance Medical Diagnostic Imaging Ltd. At the end of December 2020, 2,833 patients were waiting more than three months for an MRI scan.

Owing to the ongoing COVID-19 Public Health Emergency the majority of all Inpatient & Day Case procedures as well as outpatient appointments have been postponed. We are currently prioritising the most urgent surgical and medical cases and will restart outpatient appointments once it is deemed safe to do so.

Emergency and time-critical services continued to operate throughout the pandemic and as the weeks progressed, there was considerable growth of and investment in virtual outpatient consultations for many specialties across the system. A virtual clinic is one in which the patient and clinician interact in real time, via a video or telephone.

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