

CC/MMcN/MC

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08<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Mr Michael McNamara TD,  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 58484/21, PQ 58486/21, PQ 58487/21, PQ 58481/21, PQ 58482/21, PQ 58483/21

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the reason for the delays in recruiting the four diabetes clinical nurse specialist posts, the three dietitian post and the additional two consultant endocrinologist posts for University of Limerick Hospital some of which were approved in January 2020; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of hospital admissions through University of Limerick hospitals groups' accident and emergency or the acute medical assessment unit due to diabetic ketoacidosis or to severe hypoglycaemia in each of the years 2017 to 2020, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons over age 18 years of age who were admitted through University of Limerick hospitals group's accident and emergency or the acute medical assessment unit due to diabetic ketoacidosis or to severe hypoglycaemia in each of the years 2017 to 2020, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons who are waiting on a first appointment to the outpatients' diabetes clinic in the University of Limerick Hospitals group who are aged 18-24, 25-34 35-44, 45-54, 55-64 and over 65 years of age in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting on a first appointment to the outpatients' diabetes clinic in the University of Limerick Hospitals group for 24 months or more who are aged 18-24, 25-34 35-44, 45-54, 55-64 and over 65 years of age in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

**\*To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons waiting on a first appointment to the outpatients' diabetes clinic in any of the University of Limerick Hospitals group who have type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes or other forms of diabetes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Michael McNamara**

Dear Deputy McNamara,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Please see below data in relation to your question regarding the number of hospital admissions through our ED and medical assessment units that were due to diabetic ketoacidosis or severe hypoglycaemia:

<b>All ages</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
University Hospital Limerick ED	91	128	75	95	389
St. Johns Hospital; Limerick MAU	2	2	3	6	13
Ennis Hospital MAU	1	1	1	5	8
Nenagh Hospital MAU	4	2	0	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>419</b>

<b>Age 18 +</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
University Hospital Limerick ED	72	110	65	75	322
St. Johns Hospital MAU	2	2	3	6	13
Ennis Hospital MAU	1	1	1	5	8
Nenagh Hospital MAU	4	2	0	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>352</b>

In addition, please see below data in relation to the number of persons who are waiting on a first appointment in the outpatients diabetes clinic at UL Hospitals Group, it is not possible to differentiate between patients who have Type 1, Type 2 or any other forms of diabetes and who are waiting for an appointment.

<b>Age:</b>	<b>Patients waiting:</b>
18 to 24	7
25 to 34	22
35 to 44	68
45 to 54	118
55 to 64	168
65+	258
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>

The below table outlines the number of persons who are waiting on a first appointment in the outpatients diabetes clinic for 24 months or more:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Patients Waiting</b>
18 to 24	2
25 to 34	14
35 to 44	31
45 to 54	68
55 to 64	89
65 and over	134
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>

UL Hospitals Group recognises the need for additional resources within our adult diabetic services. This is a core focus for UL Hospitals Group and we are committed to improving the service for our patients. Developing services around insulin pump therapy and structured education in particular require us to fill further specialist posts, including nursing and dietitian posts.

While there is a specialist dietitian working with our paediatric diabetes patients, there is currently no specialist dietitian in post for adults with Type 1 Diabetes. Patients are seen by a ward dietitian as in-patients but there is no specialist dietetic care or outpatient appointments for adult diabetes patients in UHL.

Currently, the adult service in UHL is unable to commence adult patients on insulin pumps due to service demands. We do, however, accept patients established on pumps from elsewhere and these patients are managed under the care of a consultant endocrinologist. The largest group of these patients are those who have transferred from the paediatric diabetes service in UHL. All of our insulin pump patients are seen in University Hospital Limerick.

In December 2020, UL Hospitals Group received confirmation of funding to recruit three additional dietetic posts for the treatment of adult diabetes. This funding has been made available through the national clinical programme for diabetes. These posts include two senior dieticians and one staff grade dietician. I can confirm that the recruitment process for the two senior dieticians is at an advanced stage. The recruitment process is also ongoing for the staff grade dietician. We will be able to provide a more precise timeline on when we expect successful candidates to take up posts in the near future.

A second consultant endocrinologist took up post on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. Two further consultant endocrinology posts have been approved for University Hospital Limerick. These posts are currently being progressed through the approved HR process. It is not possible at this time to give a definitive timeline as to when these posts will be filled.

The Adult Diabetes Service is also supported by a dedicated team of Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) and Staff Nurses. Four Diabetic CNS posts have also been approved for University Hospital Limerick. Of these, two have been successfully recruited and will commence post over the coming months, the recruitment campaigns are currently ongoing for the other posts. There are also two Diabetic Staff Nurse positions within the Diabetes Unit at UHL, both of these positions have been filled. UL Hospitals Group continues to engage with the appropriate recruitment processes to ensure that all vacant posts are filled by suitable candidates.

Developing our diabetes services is a core focus for UL Hospitals Group and we are committed to improving this service for our patients.

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

Yours sincerely,



pp  
**Colette Cowan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**UL Hospitals Group**