

CC/VAW/MC

Email: pgmidwestacute@hse.ie

29th September 2021

Mr Violet-Anne Wynne TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 44609/21, PQ 44610/2, PQ 44611/2, PQ 44612/21

***To ask the Minister for Health when the University of Limerick Hospitals' adult diabetes service will have the level of staffing required to initiate the dose adjustment for normal eating course which are a diabetes specialist nurse and advanced nurse practitioner, one diabetes specialist dietitian and one diabetes consultant diabetologist and specialist registrar; and when such courses will be operational in University Hospital Limerick for adults with type 1 diabetes. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

***To ask the Minister for Health when the three whole-time equivalent dietitian posts announced in January 2021 will be recruited as part of winter plan and commence their posts in University Hospital Limerick adult diabetes services; and the portion of the three whole-time equivalent posts that are assigned to adult diabetes care in the acute services in Limerick, Ennis and Nenagh diabetes clinics. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

***To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons with diabetes over the age of 18 years attending University Limerick Hospitals Groups' adult diabetes service that are using insulin pump therapy to manage their condition. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

***To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons with diabetes that are waiting on a first appointment to the outpatients diabetes clinic in University of Limerick Hospitals group; and the number of those persons that are waiting over 12, 24, 36 months, 4 years and over 5 years, in tabular form. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

Dear Deputy Wynne

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.

UL Hospitals Group recognises the need for additional resources within our adult diabetic services. This issue 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. At present, there are currently 51 patients within our Adult Diabetes Service using insulin pump therapy.

In addition, please see below data in relation to your question regarding the number of patients waiting on a first appointment for the outpatients diabetes clinic at UL Hospitals Group:

Wait time	0-12 months	12-24 months	24-36 months	36-48 months	48-60 months	60+ months
Number of patients	169	152	111	129	83	13

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 dietitians and one staff grade dietitian. I can confirm that the recruitment process for the two senior dietitians is at an advanced stage. The recruitment process is also ongoing for the staff grade dietitian. We will be able to provide a more precise timeline on when we expect successful candidates to take up posts in the near future.

I am pleased to advise that a second consultant endocrinologist took up post on the 1st 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, three have been successfully recruited and will commence post over the coming months, the recruitment campaign is currently ongoing for the final CNS post. There are also two Diabetic Staff Nurse positions within the Diabetes Unit at UHL, both of these positions have been filled.

In relation to your question regarding when UL Hospitals Group will have the level of staffing required to initiate the dose adjustment for normal eating course, I can advise that the dose adjustment for normal eating course for adults with Type 1 Diabetes will be dependent on the appointment of specialist dietitians and on the recruitment of additional CNS posts. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide a definitive timeframe as to when this programme will commence.

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,



Colette Cowan
Chief Executive Officer
UL Hospitals Group