

Private & Confidential

26th October, 2021

**Deputy P. Daly, TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare St, Dublin 2**

PQ Number: 46150/21

Dear Deputy Daly,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) – South (Cork & Kerry) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to this office for response.

PQ: To ask the Minister for Health if he will report on the details of the plan to address the shortage of consultants and nursing staff at University Hospital Kerry given these staff shortages have been publicly cited as the reason that elective surgeries have been cancelled; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Pa Daly

I believe that SSWHG and UHK Management Teams met with the 5 Kerry TDs on 11th October, 2021 to give a full briefing on all services at the hospital including the issues that you have raised in your PQ concerning staff shortages, the deferral of some elective surgery at UHK. My reply below pulls on some of the data from that meeting.

Overall UHK is in a very positive position concerning Consultant appointments. The hospital is currently in the position of processing 15 new consultant positions across the hospital. Four positions, two Geriatricians, a Haematologist and a Cardiologist have already commenced service in UHK this year and the other 11 positions across Emergency Medicine, Gastroenterology, general surgery, Dermatology, Rheumatology, Microbiology, Respiratory and Urology are at advanced stages from advertisement, interview and actual appointment. UHK is also progressing the filling of a small number of vacant positions filled by locums in Radiology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Concerning nurse staff shortages, UHK is experiencing challenges regarding nurse recruitment in line with all healthcare settings across acute, voluntary and private healthcare sectors. The September position was 19.32 WTE permanent unfilled nurse vacancies and some of this will be offset by the recent recruitment of 31 graduate nurses and 30 international nurses who are currently completing the adaptation programme. Of note UHK has seen an increase of 42.54 WTE in nurse staffing since 2018.

I trust this response is to your satisfaction; should you have any further queries however, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Fearghal Grimes
General Manager
University Hospital Kerry**