

CC/MMcN/MC

Email: [pgmidwestacute@hse.ie](mailto:pgmidwestacute@hse.ie)

25th May 2022

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

RE: PQ 20501/22

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of type 1 diabetes patients who have had appointments cancelled at University Hospital Limerick between March 2020 and February 2022, inclusive; the steps that will be taken to give appointments to those patients as a matter of urgency given the risks posed as a result of the cancellations; 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 Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

It is not possible to distinguish between patients with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes who had appointments cancelled at University Hospital Limerick. The total number of diabetes patients who had appointments cancelled between March 2020 and February 2022 was 67.

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in significant disruption to health services across the country. Scheduled care across our hospitals has been particularly impacted. The reduction in scheduled care was in line with national policy on pandemic response.

The 2022 Waiting List Action Plan and HSE National Service Plan 2022 were both published by the Department of Health recently, both of these documents set out new targets on waiting lists, with a focus on the longest waiters.

There are a number of scheduled care initiatives operating across UL Hospitals Group to address waiting lists. These come under the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF), Hospital Safety Net Service Agreement and the Advanced Clinical Prioritisation Programme. Under the Private Hospital Safety Net Service Agreement, UL Hospitals Group has referred urgent surgical and medical cases to private hospitals.

We have made progress recently in recruiting staff for our adult diabetic services. A second consultant endocrinologist took up post on the 1st October 2020. In addition, two further consultant endocrinology posts have been approved for University Hospital Limerick. These posts have been advertised and interviews have recently taken place.

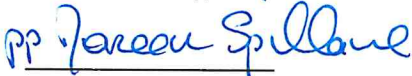
In December 2020, UL Hospitals Group received funding to recruit three additional dietetic posts for the treatment of adult diabetes. This funding was made available through the national clinical programme for diabetes. These posts include two senior dietitians and one staff grade dietitian. These posts have now been 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 been approved for University Hospital Limerick. Following recruitment campaigns, all four Clinical Nurse Specialists are now in place. There are also three Diabetic Staff Nurses in post at University Hospital Limerick.

Developing our diabetes services continues to be 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,



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