

CC/MMcN/MC

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05<sup>th</sup> July 2022

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

RE: PQ 32492/22

**To ask the Minister for Health the status of the recruitment of new staff and the expansion of the medical assessment unit at Ennis Hospital; the details of any expansion of services; if consideration will be given by his Department and the HSE for a further expansion of services provided at the facility; 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.

We were delighted to receive a funding allocation from the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) to support the provision of additional slots in the Medical Assessment Unit at Ennis Hospital. We now have capacity to see 32 patients per day between Monday and Friday and 18 new patients per day at the weekends.

The recruitment of new staff ensured the expansion of the MAU in Ennis. The number of attendances at the MAU in Ennis increased from 3,740 in 2019 to 5,673 in 2021. In the first five months of this year, attendances at Ennis MAU have seen a further annual increase of 8%. I am pleased to let you know that we recently recruited 1.0 NCHD (non-consultant hospital doctor), 0.5 WTE clerical support, a cardiology technician and three nursing staff. I refer to PQ 11425/22 and wish to advise that the recruitment situation remains unchanged, we continue to recruit for resources in allied health, general support and radiology.

The MAU at Ennis Hospital provides diagnosis and treatment for patients referred with medical conditions including chest infections, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), pneumonia, urinary tract infections, fainting episodes, clots in the leg, anaemia or non-acute cardiac problems.

GPs—or the ED— initially assess and refer patients for appointment on the same day or the following day. The multidisciplinary team at Ennis MAU led by consultant physician Dr Tom Peirce, works towards same-day diagnosis, treatment and discharge, and sees all patients within an hour of arrival.

The Medical Assessment Unit at Ennis Hospital has run as a seven-day service (8am-8pm Monday to Friday, and 10am-6pm Saturday and Sunday) since 2016 and is the only such unit within UL Hospitals Group to operate on a seven-day basis. This is in part due to the excellent relationships that have been developed between the staff in Ennis Hospital and the GP community. We are very pleased that this service is being expanded for patients in Clare and across the region.





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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**



University Hospital Limerick is a member of **UL Hospitals Group** which also comprises; Nenagh Hospital, Ennis Hospital, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, University Maternity Hospital Limerick and St. John's Hospital (voluntary).