



General Manager's Office
University Hospital Waterford,
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilkenny
South/South West Hospital Group
Email: uhwpg@hse.ie

21st March 2022

Ms Kathleen Funchion TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 15667 - To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that blood samples are transferred from general practitioner surgeries in County Carlow via train to Waterford University Hospital and that patients are often asked to transfer their own bloods and or others to collection points such as Bagenalstown train station and St. Dymphna's Hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter

Dear Deputy Funchion

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

I can confirm that the Pathology Laboratory at University Hospital Waterford provides a regional service to over 230 GP Practices in the CHO 5 Primary Care Area. It operates to the highest diagnostic standards in compliance with the International Standard for Medical Laboratories ISO15189. As part of that service, it provides for the analysis and reporting of samples collected from patients by each of those GP Practices. It provides clear information via the Laboratory user manual on the range of tests and the appropriate collection containers and also provides information for GPs on how to avail of and make best use of existing sample collection points/routes which are in use. It clearly advises users that the Laboratory at UHW is not responsible for the organisation and management of the transport service. The responsibility for ensuring the samples are sent to the Laboratory lies with the GP Practice and this is the case throughout the CHO5 area.

GPs in the CHO5 area arrange to have their samples sent by taxi/courier directly to the Laboratory at UHW or to the nearest collect point. The HSE specimen collection point for the Carlow area is Reception Desk Community Care Offices Carlow, St Dymphna's Hospital Carlow, departing at 10.30am by courier and arriving at UHW at 1pm.

UHW is not aware of any samples being transported via train nor has UHW received any requests to collect samples from Waterford (Plunkett) Train Station. It would be common practice across the CH05 area for patients to sometimes transfer their own blood samples directly to the Laboratory at UHW or for patients to drop samples to the nearest HSE specimen collection point.

It is the responsibility of each GP Practice to ensure that samples are appropriately transported to the Laboratory at UHW for testing and analysis and UHW is not responsible for the organisation and management of the transport service

I can advise that Ms Anna Marie Lanigan is the Head of Service for Primary Care for the South East Community Healthcare Area if you wish to discuss this matter further

I trust the above is satisfactory but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Grace Rothwell
General Manager
University Hospital Waterford
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital

c.c. Ms Anna Marie Lanigan Head of Service-Primary Care, South East Community Healthcare