



Géaroibríochtaí
Aonad 4A, Áras Dargan, An Ceantar Theas, An Bóthar
Míleata Cill Mhaighneann, Baile Átha Cliath 8

Acute Operations
Unit 4A, The Dargan Building, Heuston South Quarter,
Military Road, Kilmainham, Dublin 8

☎: 0179 59971 📧: acute.operations@hse.ie

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Deputy Matt Carthy TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ No. 43872/22

To ask the Minister for Health if he proposes to review the current operation of minor injuries units across the State with a view to expanding the services in order to ease pressure on general practitioner services and emergency departments; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Carthy,

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.

Response:

Injury units (IUs) are designed and resourced for the treatment of patients with broken bones, dislocations, sprains, strains, wounds, scalds and minor burns that are unlikely to need overnight admission to hospital.

When used appropriately, IUs enable the streaming of patients with less serious injury away from Emergency Departments (EDs). The use of IUs does not reduce ED crowding and trolley waits because those patients who need admission to hospital will still be required to attend an ED.

Patients can go directly to the IU or be referred by a GP but because of the limited cohort of patients that IUs see, they are unlikely to significantly ease the burden on general practitioner services from an operational perspective. However, IUs can contribute to a reduction of congestion in ED waiting rooms because IU patients

attending an ED are likely to be triaged to wait while those with more urgent requirements are being assessed and treated.

I trust this answers your question to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Benton

General Manager

Acute Operations