

CC/MQ/MC

Email: pqmidwestacute@hse.ie

25th April 2023

Mr Maurice Quinlivan TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 17991/23

To ask the Minister for Health to provide details, in tabular form, on the number of theatre appointments by procedure type that were cancelled at University Hospital Limerick in 2022; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Maurice Quinlivan

Dear Deputy Quinlivan,

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.

Please see below a breakdown outlining the number of theatre appointments by specialty that were cancelled at University Hospital Limerick in 2022, in tabular form.

Specialty	Number of procedures cancelled
Breast	8
Cardiology	18
Haematology	1
Dental	7
Dermatology	27
Endocrinology	2
Gastroenterology	15
General Medicine	6
General Surgery	63
Geriatric Medicine	1
Gynaecology	19
Maxillofacial	62
Nephrology	8
Neurology	1
Oncology	2

Ophthalmology	54
Otolaryngology	76
Paediatrics	93
Respiratory Medicine	58
Urology	44
Vascular	2
Total	567

We regret that any patient has their procedure deferred. While procedures may be cancelled by the hospital, the above dataset also includes instances where the procedure has been cancelled by the patients themselves or by their parents/guardians. In many cases this is the appropriate thing to do. In addition, in cases where appointments are cancelled multiple times and rescheduled, it is possible that one patient can have multiple cancellations reported in any given reporting period.

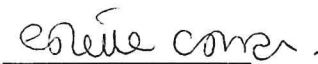
Reductions in scheduled care may also be necessary at times of high demand for unscheduled care. This is in line with the hospital escalation plan. These decisions are never taken lightly, especially in the case of patients who we know have already faced long waits for treatment. We always endeavour to reschedule patients as soon as possible.

A recent analysis found that admissions through the ED at UHL account for 83% of inpatient bed days, leaving limited capacity for elective activity. Frequent cancellations of elective activity to accommodate increases in demand for emergency care have resulted in long waiting lists.

In 2022, UL Hospitals Group met the targets for inpatient, day case and endoscopy waiting lists as set out in the National Waiting List Action Plan. This was largely achieved through the use of private, virtual and extra out-of-hours clinics including various outsourcing and insourcing initiatives. Last year, we reduced the total number of outpatients waiting by 20% and the number of long waiters (18 months and over) by 58%.

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