

CC/MMcN/MC

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

28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Mr Michael McNamara TD,  
Dàil Éireann,  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

PQ 7371/23

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of people working at University Hospital Limerick on 8 February 2020; the corresponding figure for 8 February 2023; if he will provide details of any additional posts created during this three-year period; 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.

Please see below Table 1 which sets out the growth in the total number of people employed (headcount) by UL Hospitals Group and at University Hospital Limerick between February 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 and February 8<sup>th</sup> 2023.

Headcount	UL Hospitals Group	UHL
08/02/2020	4,663	3,438
08/02/2023	5,837	4,359

**Table 1**

Another measure used to track workforce strength is the number of whole-time equivalent (WTE) staff employed in a service. This data is published monthly by the HSE in its workforce reports available at the link below:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/our-workforce/workforce-reporting/>

The nearest available data for the requested date range is set out in Table 2 below in respect of UL Hospitals Group and University Hospital Limerick.

WTE	UL Hospitals Group	UHL	All Acute Hospitals
31/01/2020	4,157	2,820	62,310
31/01/2023	5,306	3,698	74,400

**Table 2**

This data shows that in the three years up to the end of January 2023, the number of whole-time equivalent staff employed at University Hospital Limerick grew by 31%, compared to 28% within UL Hospitals Group as a whole and 19% across all HSE acute services (hospital groups and National Ambulance Service).

We operate under the HSE Performance & Accountability Framework, where posts must advance through our local Employment Control Committee (ECC) for approval and where certain senior posts must also be approved at a national level.

The table below represents the number of newly approved posts at the UL Hospitals Group Employment Control Committee between 2020 and 2022.

ULHG	ECC Approval*
2020	986
2021	869
2022	418

**Table 3**

\*These represent the ECC Approvals by individual post and not by WTE value.

Much of this increase in staffing relates to the opening of additional capacity during 2020 and 2021, including 98 new inpatient beds at UHL, 10 new critical care beds at UHL and the new ward and

theatre block at Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, in addition to resources recruited to respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

As indicated above, there has been a considerable increase in staffing levels across all grades at UL Hospitals Group in recent years. This was particularly evident during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic when hundreds of new staff were recruited to support the opening of additional capacity.

During 2022, UL Hospitals Group ran more than 200 recruitment campaigns for both new and replacement posts.

It is important to acknowledge the support we have received from the HSE in growing our workforce in recent years. It is also important to point out that we are still playing catch-up on our overall staffing levels relative to other hospital groups.

This was also highlighted in the Deloitte Report published last year. The report recommended a significant increase in medical, nursing and allied health staff for UL Hospitals Group to meet the growing demands of the region. We will continue to work with all stakeholders to increase staffing levels.

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**