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7 June 2023

**Deputy Catherine Connolly,
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2**

PQ 26047/23: To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 40 of 20 April 2023, if he will provide an update on the development of the new elective hospital in Merlin Park; the expected timeline for the design team to be in place; the expected timeline for the site investigations to be carried out; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Catherine Connolly

Dear Deputy Connolly,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The HSE remains committed to the timeline of 2023 to end 2027 for handover to the operational system of all Elective Hospitals as set out in the Enhanced Provision of Elective Care Programme Preliminary Business Case, prepared by the Department of Health. At this stage, the timeline is based on several assumptions, although the HSE is working towards this timeline, the actual timeline can only be determined to a greater degree of certainty once design, planning and building tendering is completed and approvals to allow the HSE to proceed are received.

The next phase is being progressed which requires the HSE to develop detailed project briefs, a procurement strategy and detailed business cases for Cork and Galway by October 2023. There is considerable service design and planning associated with the development of these documents, the indicative timelines for the completion of same by the HSE is last quarter 2023.

To drive time and cost efficiencies, these Hospitals will be delivered using standardised repeatable design solutions, with standard schedules of accommodation, utilising off-site manufacturing approaches and modern methods of construction in-line with Government recommendations.

In relation to your specific question concerning the design team and site investigations, a summary update is provided below:

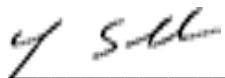
- We have secured the services of an incumbent design team to immediately take forward the design process.
- In parallel, we will progress through an accelerated procurement process the securing of an integrated design team to take forward seamlessly the design process on conclusion of this

phase of design to completion across the four sites. This approach ensures that work on the design of the Elective Hospitals for Cork and Galway can proceed without any delay.

- To fulfil the requirements for the detailed Business Case by October we will have completed concept design of both the Galway and Cork Hospitals which will include detailed standardised design for the standard components of an elective hospital including;
 - Operating Theatres Suite inc. Pre-op & Recovery (shared and/or individual)
 - Outpatients Suite inc. Minor Ops Rooms
 - Day case units
 - Endoscopy Suite
 - Imaging Hub
- Site investigations, which are required as part of the design process are also progressing. In addition, we will also commence discussions with local Planning authorities. It is anticipated that this work will take place over the next 3 months.

I trust the above information is of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

Yours sincerely



Yvonne Goff
National Director, Change & Innovation