

**General Manager's Office
University Hospital Galway
Newcastle Road
Galway
Tel: (091) 544200**

4th July, 2023

REF: PQ 31041/23

RE: To ask the Minister for Health the names of the companies or individuals contracted by the HSE to remove 70 trees from Merlin Woods in 2023; the name of the arborist who carried out an assessment of the trees in advance of the works; if he will provide details of how the timber from the removed trees was disposed of, and in particular the destination of this timber and its use; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Neasa Hourigan

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you directly in the context of the request for information referenced above.

In response to your query, the most competitive quote for these works was provided by an approved Contractor. To protect the privacy rights of the Contractor, we have been requested not to disclose the name of the business in this regard and so the name of the company will not be disclosed.

This work was completed as part of normal annual maintenance work within the grounds of Merlin Park hospital. The HSE engaged a Tree Surgery contractor to remove trees that were decaying and at risk of falling and also those of particular concern affected by Ash Dieback Disease. These trees were adjacent / overhanging on walkways and in a small number of cases, too close to buildings.

A number of trees that were along the routes of proposed footpaths to be constructed this year were also removed. Smaller trees and scrub within the campus grounds that were encroaching onto footpaths and too close to buildings were also trimmed back.

Before the works commenced, the HSE ordered 60 replacement trees, which have now been planted within the Merlin Park. Approximately 70 trees were removed. This work was done in conjunction with the MPUH Grounds Maintenance Team, which is led by a qualified Horticulturalist.

The majority of the timber from the cutting was at the time, mulched on the spot. This mulch was either spread at the cutting sites or brought to the Gardeners Compound for use around the site. Some of the logs that were too large to mulch were left aside in the area they were cut.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Kane

General Manager

Galway University Hospitals

