



General Manager's Office
University Hospital Waterford,
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilkenny
South/South West Hospital Group
Email: uhwpq@hse.ie

8th March 2023

Mr David Cullinane TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 11258 - To ask the Minister for Health the extent of the backlog in urgent and routine cancer test processing at University Hospital Waterford; the number of tests outstanding; the average length of time it is taking the laboratory to process such tests; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane

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.

I can confirm that the backlog in the reporting of histopathology specimens at University Hospital Waterford relates to the reporting of routine samples between September 2022 and February 2023. It remains a priority for UHW to process all urgent samples without delay.

Any specimen suspected of cancer or where there is a known diagnosis of cancer is marked as urgent. All cancer and other urgent specimens are prioritised and reported in a timely manner compliant with defined turn around times. These are monitored and reported to the National Quality Improvement Scheme in Pathology as well as to the National Cancer Control Programmes.

We are working hard to address the backlog in as timely a manner as possible and a number of measures have been taken to support the service. These measures include Consultant Histopathologists and Medical Scientists working additional hours and weekends; the use of additional medical agency staff; and additional supports from other hospital laboratories. Efforts continue to source and secure further supports including additional Histopathologists and laboratories so that the backlog can be cleared as soon as possible.

I trust the above is satisfactory but if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Grace Rothwell
General Manager
University Hospital Waterford
Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital