

CC/MB/MC

Email: pgmidwestacute@hse.ie

05th April 2023

Mr Martin Browne TD,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 13337/23, PQ 13336/23

*** To ask the Minister for Health when a decision will be made on the bid by the HSE for €5.2 million to support the medical assessment units at Nenagh, Ennis and St. John's Hospitals; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Martin Browne**

***To ask the Minister for Health the data used that resulted in the increase in nursing resources for the medical assessment unit in Nenagh; his views on whether the increase in WTEs is sufficient; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Martin Browne**

Dear Deputy Browne,

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 am pleased to let you know that UL Hospitals Group has been approved for a multi-million euro funding package that will extend the operational hours of the Medical Assessment Units (MAUs) in St John's and Nenagh Hospitals to seven days per week.

The HSE's National Acute Division has approved the Group's application for €5.2m to provide the necessary staffing resources at St John's and Nenagh, and secure the already extended weekend service at Ennis MAU into the future.

Recruitment is underway for an additional 51.45 WTE across a number of specialties for the MAU services, including medical doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, health and social care professionals and administrative staff.

In 2022, 12,737 patients were referred to the MAUs in the three hospitals, which have played an integral role in ED avoidance, patient flow to Model 2 hospitals, and appropriate community referrals. UL Hospitals Group is grateful to the new HSE Chief Executive, Bernard Gloster, for his support for our funding application to expand the MAU services in our Model 2 hospitals.

Weekend opening of all three MAUs will greatly assist hospital management and GP colleagues to avoid unnecessary attendances at the ED and admission to UHL. As you are aware, the region's main acute hospital, serving the population of Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary, continues to experience an exceptionally high level of demand for emergency care and inpatient beds at present.



Working together, caring for you

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This investment will also provide further support for the recently introduced '999 Ambulance Protocol' service for appropriate medical patients to the MAUs. It is important to note that the introduction of the new ambulance pathway did not require an expansion in physical capacity or opening hours and therefore a large staff increase was not required to facilitate the roll-out of this initiative.

I trust this clarifies the position, please contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Prof Colette Cowan'.

Prof Colette Cowan
Chief Executive Officer
UL Hospitals Group