



9th February 2024

Deputy Paul Murphy TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Murphy,

Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the below Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister of Health.

PQ ref 42475/23

To ask the Minister for Health if he is aware of the ongoing issues experienced in relation to the dialysis machines in Tallaght Hospital (details supplied); what actions his Department will take to resolve this issue; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

I note from the request for information that a member of the public had raised an issue with you that there was frequent malfunctioning of the dialysis equipment despite it being new equipment.

Following a regional HSE tender process which concluded in 2022, Vendor X won the contract as the new provider of Dialysis Equipment and Consumables for TUH, replacing the previous provider Vendor Y. Roll-out of new haemodialysis machines initially occurred in Tullamore Hospital in Q4 2022, followed by roll-out in the Vartry Haemodialysis Unit in TUH in Q1 of 2023.

Vendor X provided TUH with 59 haemodialysis machines, which were delivered in sequential batches to us. Roll-out of these machines requires each one to be commissioned and validated and have initial water-testing carried out, with phased removal of the old equipment as the new machines came on-line. The entire nursing staff of the Dialysis unit were trained in sequential groups by Vendor X's team in the correct use of the new dialysis machines. Consumables to be used during each dialysis sessions were also delivered to TUH and the renal nursing staff instructed in their correct use. Some level of disruption is expected in the Dialysis Unit during such a change-over period, and this was managed accordingly by the dialysis unit managers to try to minimize its effect on patients.

Unfortunately there have been some issues arising from the changeover to the new equipment that were unforeseen, and certainly have caused some delays to patient treatment at times.

1. At the time of the new tender roll-out the service provider experienced a large drop in their technical services manpower, which reduced the number of available engineers to be on-site to deal with machine faults, often prolonging the amount of time that a particular machine had to stay out of service. However, it should be stated that at no juncture was there the situation where a functioning dialysis machine was not available to carry out a patient's treatment. Representatives from TUH, clinical engineering, nursing, medical, procurement and finance, have been meeting and interacting with the new supplier on a regular basis around the level of service provision.
2. Secondly, there was an issue with connections from the sterile dialysis water loop system to each of the new machines as there has been a number of water leaks from the new dialysis machines,



particularly overnight following the water loop heat disinfection. It has been confirmed by the new suppliers that there is a compatibility issue. These leaks have caused delays to patient treatment at times, as when dialysis staff have found these leaks the machines then need to be taken out of circulation on the floor and replaced. B Braun have now sourced the connectors from another third party, so this will improve the situation.

I trust this information will be useful to you in understanding the query raised by the member of the public in your constituency.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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MR JOHN KELLY
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE