

CC/MB/MC

Email: pqmidwestacute@hse.ie

20th June 2024

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

PQ 6455/24

To ask the Minister for Health his views on the need to repurpose the nightingale beds at University Hospital Limerick to provide a more immediate increase in capacity at the hospital, rather than decommissioning them; to outline any engagements he has had on this matter; 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.

Larger nightingale wards are an Infection Prevention and Control risk. Their open plan configuration often results in large numbers of beds being closed to manage infection outbreaks, and provides continual challenges due to the ongoing high demand for isolation facilities in UHL. However, it is our plan to refurbish some of the more outdated inpatient accommodation on the UHL site.

For example, as you are aware, work commenced on the first 96 bed block in September 2022. It is currently envisaged that the construction phase will be complete by Q1 2025.

It should be noted that of the 96 beds in this facility, 72 will be new bed stock, and 24 replacement beds for older bed stock in nightingale ward areas of UHL that are in line for refurbishment.

In addition, works have commenced on the delivery of the lower section of the second 96 bed block including basement car parking at UHL which will form the podium for delivery of a further 96 Bed Unit (Block B) overhead. This preparatory project was initiated in 2023 and planning permission was granted in September 2023.

Subject to planning and procurement, it is envisaged this project will be delivered by 2027. This bed block will provide 96 new beds comprising of 48 medical beds and 48 surgical beds.

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

Yours sincerely,



Ms Colette Cowan
Chief Executive Officer
UL Hospitals Group