

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

28<sup>th</sup> February, 2024

REF: PQ 7069/24

RE: To ask the Minister for Health considering that patients from University Hospital Galway (UHG) are being sent to Kingsbridge Hospital in the North for certain urology procedures as part of the national treatment purchase fund, and additional expenses related to travel and accommodation are incurred, if he has considered hiring an additional urologist for UHG as a cost saving measure. -Mairéad Farrell

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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, we wish to advise Galway University Hospitals, like all Public Hospitals in Ireland are supported by the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) to outsource patients into the private sector. The purpose of this process is to support Hospitals in providing access for patients who have been on the Waiting list for extended periods of time.

Whilst the access provided through NTPF is much needed to address the significant backlog of long waiting patients on the Urology waiting list, there has also been a lot of work done internally and there is a lot of work ongoing to help address the underlying capacity issues including the provision of additional clinics and initiative lists.

Over the past few years, there have been additional Consultant posts appointed into the Saolta Group aligned with the Models of Care. Access opportunities are also being set up through the Modernised Care Pathways which will also help to improve access for patients with certain conditions.

Improving access for patients is our overarching priority and we employ a number of different strategies to meet this objective.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



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Chris Kane  
General Manager  
Galway University Hospitals