

CC/VAW/MC

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19<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Ms Violet Anne Wynne TD  
Dáil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

PQ 9881/24

**To ask the Minister for Health the reason that a site in Limerick as opposed to a site in Clare was selected for a surgical hub; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Violet-Anne Wynne**

Dear Deputy Wynne,

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.

Surgical hubs are a key priority for the HSE and UL Hospitals Group in improving access for surgical patients and reducing waiting lists. The locations for the six surgical hubs were decided by the Department of Health.

The planning application for the Limerick surgical hub provides for two new operating theatres and two procedure rooms in a state-of-the-art development on the Scoil Carmel site. It is proposed that the new surgical hub will provide services for patients across the region, operating as a satellite of University Hospital Limerick and with key staff moving between the sites.

The Sláintecare Report (2017) calls for an end to excessive waiting times and sets out ambitious access targets. The report highlights the need for greater separation between emergency and elective care in order to create the ringfenced elective capacity to support the achievement of the Sláintecare access targets. This has become an increasing problem in UHL in recent years with frequent cancellations of scheduled care patients to accommodate medical patients admitted through the Emergency Department and time-critical and emergency surgery.

Ennis Hospital will also continue to play an essential role in helping us meet these ambitious national targets for scheduled care. Ennis is a centre for outpatients, day surgery and endoscopy.

We are pleased that surgical day ward activity in Ennis in 2023 (13,602) has recovered from the serious disruptions in scheduled care caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and experienced across the country. Day case activity levels in Ennis last year exceeded pre-pandemic levels.



Working together, caring for you

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Our ambition is that activity at Ennis Hospital will continue to grow we are pleased to have submitted a planning application for the €9.95 million upgrade of the theatre complex and sterile services department in Ennis.

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

Yours sincerely,

**Professor Colette Cowan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**UL Hospitals Group**

