

***Hospital Manager's Office
Letterkenny University Hospital, Letterkenny,
Co. Donegal F92 AE81***

Telephone: (074) 9123501

Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

23rd September 2024

Re : To ask the Minister for Health the percentage of blood tests for Letterkenny University Hospital (LUH) that are outsourced; the date blood tests have been outsourced from; the cost of outsourcing blood tests; the cost in comparison to equivalent in-house testing; the cost-benefit analysis the HSE undertook before deciding to outsource blood testing; if the HSE considered doing it in-house instead; the concerns there are that test results come back from the third party lab in a different format to those tested at LUH; the impact this is having on GPs and surgeries; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Pearse Doherty

Dear Deputy,

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 have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

With the exception of a small volume of esoteric tests LUH Pathology Department are currently outsourcing 5.5% of the total GP workload and 3.3% of the total Pathology Department workload since the 19th March 2024. The volume of GP tests referred out to a third party provider is the absolute minimum to relieve the excessive pressure on the provision of service in the Blood Science Department. The possibility of staff doing overtime was explored extensively but was not applicable as there is already a mandatory requirement to provide 24/7 on call cover with a small number of staff.

LUH Blood sciences is at capacity with analysers in full operation from 0800 to 20.00 our routine operational hours. The extra space required to facilitate the additional analysers to allow the processing of all samples in routine hours requires an extension to the current Blood sciences building. LUH are currently in discussion to progress an arrangement with Procurement to provide a turn-key solution to deliver a second track on blood sciences laboratory, including modular accommodation.

The Pathology Department keep a log and ensure that all patient samples sent to the third party laboratory provider are resultd on the provider's portal.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.



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Yours Sincerely,



**Seán Murphy
General Manager
Letterkenny General Hospital**