



17<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

Deputy Peadar Tóibín, TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ 17190/25**

**To ask the Minister for Health the number of emergency departments which have closed in the State in each of the past 20 years; and the number of emergency departments which have been opened in the State in that time**

Dear Deputy Murphy,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the Emergency Medicine Programme (EMP) on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

Over the past two decades, Ireland has experienced changes in the landscape of Emergency Care, including both closures and the establishment of new facilities.

The arrangements for unscheduled care for Model 2 hospitals were described in the document “Securing the Future of Smaller Hospitals: A Framework for Development”<sup>1</sup>. The report stated that the challenge was to make sure that smaller hospitals provided the right type of services, which can safely be delivered in those settings, so that the benefit to patients was maximised.

The recommendation from that report was that an Injury Unit (IU) be located in model 2 Hospitals that would aim to provide unscheduled emergency care for patients with non-life threatening or limb-threatening injuries, as conveniently as possible, while ensuring patient safety and equitable standards of care. The reconfiguration of Emergency Departments (EDs) into IUs occurred at different times across various hospitals:

<b>2007</b>	ED services in Our Lady's Hospital, Cashel were transferred to South Tipperary General Hospital.
<b>2009</b>	Publication of the. HIQA Report of the investigation into the quality and safety of services and supporting arrangements provided by the Health Service Executive at the Mid-Western Regional Hospital Ennis <sup>2</sup>  ED services in Ennis and Nenagh General Hospitals were reconfigured into Medical Assessment Units (MAUs) for GP referrals and IUs for GP or self-referral of people who had suffered non-life threatening or limb-threatening injuries, operating 12 hours daily as part of a restructuring of acute services across the HSE Mid-Western region. In the same year, ED services in Monaghan General Hospital ceased and an IU service commenced.
<b>2010</b>	The ED in Dundalk's Louth County Hospital was reconfigured as part of the North East Transformation programme into an MAU for GP referrals and an IU for GP or self-referral of people who had suffered non-life threatening or limb-threatening injuries, operating 12 hours daily.
<b>2011</b>	Publication of the HIQA report on Report of the investigation into the quality and safety of services and supporting arrangements provided by the Health Service Executive at Mallow General Hospital <sup>3</sup>  The ED at Roscommon University Hospital was part of a reconfiguration of emergency services in the region, with emergency presentations being redirected to the ED closest to the patient's home. Roscommon University Hospital continues to provide unscheduled care to many patients in its MAU and IU.



<b>2012</b>	<p>The ED at the South Infirmary was closed, and its services were consolidated with the Cork University Hospital (CUH) and Mercy University Hospital.</p> <p>Since then, Cork University Hospital has become the main hospital in the South West region providing the full spectrum of emergency care.</p> <p>The South Infirmary continues to operate as a general hospital, providing a range of other, mostly scheduled, medical services. To facilitate localised unscheduled care needs, a stand-alone IU (i.e. existing outside of a hospital setting) was established at St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork city, on the grounds of the former St. Mary's Orthopaedic Hospital.</p>
<b>2013</b>	<p>DoH and HSE published <a href="#">Securing the Future of Smaller Hospitals: A Framework for Development</a>.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The EDs in Mallow, Bantry, St. John's Limerick and St Columcille's were reconfigured into MAUs for GP referrals and IU for injury GP or self-referrals, operating 12 hours daily.</p>

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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**Anne Horgan**  
**General Manager**

#### References

1. Securing the Future of Smaller Hospitals: A Framework for Development (2013)  
<http://hdl.handle.net/10147/623977>
2. [https://www.hiqa.ie/sites/default/files/2017-01/investigation\\_report\\_mid-western\\_regional\\_enis.pdf](https://www.hiqa.ie/sites/default/files/2017-01/investigation_report_mid-western_regional_enis.pdf)
3. <https://www.hiqa.ie/sites/default/files/2017-01/Investigation-Mallow-report.pdf>