

Private & Confidential

7th May 2025

Deputy Michael Cahill
Dáil Éireann, Leinster House,
Kildare St, Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Cahill,

Ref PQ 19612/25 :

To ask the Minister for Health if increased radiotherapy and chemotherapy services will be available at University Hospital Kerry, with the planned upgrade of the oncology unit ; [to eliminate tedious journeys by Kerry cancer patients to Cork city hospitals, for up to 35 daily trips in some cases] and if she will make a statement on the matter. -Michael Cahill

Dear Deputy Cahill,

As is the case nationally and indeed internationally, demand for cancer treatments has significantly increased, with patients at UHK and elsewhere receiving more treatments for longer.

Specifically with regard to Oncology Development at UHK, the reconfiguration of ward space in late 2023 enabled the establishment of an **Interim** Oncology Unit. While this Unit did give rise to an increase in capacity and allows for a more extensive range of treatments, it is long acknowledged that the service requires a permanent stand-alone Oncology & Haematology Unit.

Accordingly development of the planned permanent Oncology and Haematology Unit [currently at 2nd capital submission stage], will be future proofed from a number of perspectives, including capacity wise to provide safe, timely, evidence based care to our Oncology patients. The new Unit will provide Chemotherapy as well as other innovative therapies such as Immunotherapy. Radiotherapy however, is only provided in approved sites [which are Model 4 Hospitals], throughout Ireland.

I trust this response is to your satisfaction; should you have any further queries however, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Fitzgerald

**Hospital Manager / Head of Service
University Hospital Kerry**