

**Minutes of Regional Health Forum West Meeting held on
Tuesday, 26th September 2023 at 2.00pm in Room 1, Education Centre,
Merlin Park, Galway.**

Miontuairiscí chruinniú an Fhórait Sláinte Réigiúnaigh a tionóladh Dé Máirt, 26^ú Meán Fómhair 2023
ag 2.00 i.n, i Seomra 1 an tIonad Oideachais,
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Ospidéal Páirc Mheirlinne, Gaillimh

Chairperson: Cllr Donagh Killilea

Members Present	Members Present (continued)	Members Present (continued)
Cllr Finola Armstrong McGuire	Cllr Blackie Gavin	Cllr Peter Roche
Cllr Declan Bree	Cllr Donal Gilroy	Cllr Peggy Ryan
Cllr Ciaran Brogan	Cllr Felim Gurn	Cllr Tony Ward
Cllr John Carroll	Cllr Mary Howard	
Cllr Liam Carroll	Cllr Michael Kilcoyne	Members Absent
Cllr Tom Conaghan	Cllr Seamus Morris	Cllr Bill Chambers
Cllr John Connolly	Cllr Cillian Murphy	Cllr Tom Crosby
Cllr Gerry Crawford	Cllr Declan McDonnell	Cllr Liam Grant
Cllr John Cummins	Cllr Martin McLoughlin	Cllr Sean Hartigan
Cllr Frankie Daly	Cllr Gerry McMonagle	Cllr Dara Mulvey
Cllr Albert Doherty	Cllr Martina O'Connor	Cllr Dan McSweeney
Cllr John Egan	Cllr Daithí Ó Cualáin	Cllr John Sheahan
Cllr Paddy Farrell	Cllr John O'Hara	Cllr Kevin Sheahan
Cllr Francis Foley	Cllr Dr Evelyn Francis Parsons	

In attendance:

Tony Canavan, Executive Lead, Regional Health Forum/CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group
Ann Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group
Niall Murray, General Manager, Area Operations, NAS
Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group
John Fitzmaurice, CO, Community Healthcare West
Dermot Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo
Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare
Marian Cavanagh, Regional Health Forum Office
Anna Lyons, Regional Health Forum Office
Pauline Clerkin, Regional Health Forum Office

862/107/23

Minutes of previous meeting – 27th June 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 27th June 2023 were proposed by Cllr Liam Carroll, seconded by Cllr Gerry McMonagle and adopted.

863/107/23 Questions:

W107Q3811 - Primary Health Care Centre in Oranmore:

Action: John Fitzmaurice to follow up with Joe Hoare for an Estates response to Cllr Liam Carroll regarding when is the close out of the Oranmore Project? Does it have to go through the whole process again, including planning permission?

W107Q3763 – GP for Laherdaun:

Action: John Fitzmaurice is to follow up with regard to the doctor that made contact with the HSE in relation to the GP position in Laherdaun and revert to Cllr Michael Kilcoyne.

W107Q3770 – Donegal Town Community Hospital:

Action: Joe Hoare to provide an update to Cllr Tom Conaghan on the timeline for the Donegal Town Community Hospital.

W107Q3781 – Portiuncula University Hospital Consultant Radiologist:

Action: Ann Cosgrove is to advise Cllr Evelyn Francis Parsons on when the next meeting of the Consultant Advisory Application Committee is taking place that will consider the position of Consultant Radiologist PUH.

W107Q3782 – St Brigid’s Hospital Ballinasloe:

Action: Joe Hoare to provide Cllr Evelyn Francis Parsons with an update on the progress regarding the St Brigid’s Hospital Property Campus portfolio.

W107Q3787 - Review of cases of Subgaleal Haemorrhage in UHG:

Action: Tony Canavan to provide Cllr Evelyn Francis Parsons with an update at the next Regional Health Forum meeting on the review of cases of Subgaleal Haemorrhage in 2022.

W107Q3789 - Old Health Centre, Binion, Clonmany:

Action: Joe Hoare to provide Cllr Albert Doherty with an update on the expediting of the disposal of the property at the old Health Centre, Binion.

W107Q3790 – Riverwalk House and Milltown House Carndonagh:

Action: Joe Hoare is to update Cllr Albert Doherty on the report from the MICA assessment on the building at Milltown House.

Action: Dermot Monaghan is to advise Cllr Albert Doherty before or at the next Regional Health Forum when respite services will reopen at Riverwalk House.

W107Q3793 – Home Help Mayo:

Action: John Fitzmaurice committed to reviewing the communication channels into the Home Help department in Mayo and revert to Cllr John O’Hara with contact details.

W107Q3795 & W107Q3797 - FOI & Data Protection Requests:

Action: Ann Cosgrove will provide Cllr Declan Bree with the timeline for FOI and Data Protection requests for hospitals within the Saolta University Health Care Group.

W107Q3796 – CAMHS ID North West:

Action: Dermot Monaghan to provide Cllr Declan Bree with an update in relation to the provision of the CAMHS –ID service for the North West.

W107Q3800 – Aras Mhic Dara Carraroe:

Action: John Fitzmaurice will keep Cllr Dáithí Ó Cualáin updated on the recruitment process for the day and residential services in Áras Mhic Dara Carraroe.

W107Q3803 – Galway Roscommon CAMHS – MHID:

Action: John Fitzmaurice to provide Cllr John Connolly with the type of Therapeutic Interventions the children receive on a regular basis in the Galway Roscommon CAMHS–MHID.

W107Q3809 – Consultant Endocrinologist at Letterkenny University Hospital:

Action: Tony Canavan will follow up regarding a meeting with Donegal Diabetes Committee and the Management of Letterkenny University Hospital.

W107Q3810 – Minor Injuries Clinic in Donegal:

Action: RHF office to organise a presentation at a Regional Health Forum Committee on how bed management works within the hospitals.

W107Q3813 – External Interview Panel:

Action: Cllr Gilroy to be advised on how many former HSE Staff are paid by the HSE from the figures provided in response to the above question?

W107Q3816 – Agency Staff at Letterkenny University Hospital:

Action: Tony Canavan to provide Cllr Ciaran Brogan with the name of the Medical Recruitment Agencies that provide staff to Letterkenny University Hospital and the areas in which the agency staff are employed.

Standing Orders were suspended due to time; Cllr Donagh Killilea proposed the continuation and it was seconded by Cllr Declan Bree.

864/107/23 Motions

W107M170 – Hydrotherapy pool at Cregg House Sligo:

This motion was proposed by Cllr Donal Gilroy and seconded by Cllr Declan Bree and agreed by all Councillors present.

Action: Motion to be forwarded to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

As the Quorum was not reached the remaining Motions were deferred/adjourned until the next Meeting of the Regional Health Forum West, 28th November 2023:

W107M167 – Cllr Donagh Killilea

W107M168 – Cllr Declan Bree

W108M169 – Cllr John Connolly

865/107/23 Date & Time of Next Meeting:

The next **Regional Health Forum Committee** meeting will take place on Tuesday, 24th October 2023.

The next **Regional Health Forum Meeting** will take place on Tuesday, 28th November 2023 at 1pm in Galway.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

Cathaoirleach/Chairman

Adopted at the Regional Health Forum West meeting

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES RECEIVED
REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM WEST – 27TH FEBRUARY 2024

Number:	QUESTION	RAISED BY	Page No.
W108Q3819	50 Bed unit at the Sacred Heart Hospital Roscommon- Progression.	ClIr T Ward	3
W108Q3820	Home Help waiting list- South Roscommon and in Co. Roscommon?	ClIr T Ward	3
W108Q3821	Services for children with disabilities – travel outside Roscommon.	ClIr T Ward	3-4
W108Q3822	Mental health staffing in County Roscommon.	ClIr T Ward	4
W108Q3823	LUH- Plans and timeframe for the new extension for the Emergency Dept.	ClIr G McMonagle	4
W108Q3824	LUH- ICU Bed numbers and approval to increase bed capacity.	ClIr G McMonagle	4
W108Q3825	CHO1- Progress re issues raised by parents of Children with Special Needs.	ClIr G McMonagle	4
W108Q3826	Special Needs Parent Network- proposal to Redeploy resources re therapies.	ClIr G McMonagle	4-5
W108Q3827	Treating children/ young people with additional needs who need general anaesthetic for dental work. Staffing, cost and waiting list.	ClIr M Howard	5
W108Q3828	New X-ray unit in Tuam – Cost & Timeline of installation and operation.	ClIr D Killilea	6
W108Q3829	Charges and payment the PPP Primary Care Centre company received for services (mains water/waste water etc) for the new O Toole CNU?	ClIr D Killilea	6
W108Q3830	O Toole CNU in Tuam- opening date, bed use and plans for Aras Mhuire.	ClIr D Killilea	6
W108Q3831	Developments planned- hospitals in Galway, value and timeline.	ClIr D Killilea	6-8
W108Q3832	Status update re Primary Care Centres in Clare, Ennistymon and Sixmilebridge.	ClIr C Murphy	8
W108Q3833	Improvements to diabetes services in the UHL group, impact on waiting lists.	ClIr C Murphy	8-10
W108Q3834	Emergency asthma admissions to UHL 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.	ClIr C Murphy	10-14
W108Q3835	Breakdown by age cohort and waiting times for CAMHS for Clare for 2022.	ClIr C Murphy	14-15
W108Q3836	Update on the development of Gort Primary Care Centre including timelines.	ClIr E Francis Parsons	15
W108Q3837	HSE Plans including timelines for the two vacant HSE properties on the Ennis Road Gort.	ClIr E Francis Parsons	15
W108Q3838	Update on timeline re demolition of the fire-damaged Health Centre in Ballygar.	ClIr E Francis Parsons	15-16
W108Q3839	UHG review re babies with subgaleal haemorrhage during 2022.	ClIr E Francis Parsons	16
W108Q3840	MUH winter trolley numbers plans/ Risk assessments re premature discharge.	ClIr M Kilcoyne	16-17
W108Q3841	GP positions are filled by locums in Mayo, how long have they been in place?	ClIr M Kilcoyne	17
W108Q3842	How many respite beds has the HSE in Mayo and where are they located?	ClIr M Kilcoyne	18
W108Q3843	Home helps in Mayo- Impact of cuts in health expenditure, how many currently employed by the HSE and how many are supplied by contractors/ agency.	ClIr M Kilcoyne	19
W108Q3844	Update on the progress of the new hospital for Carrick on Shannon.	ClIr F Armstrong McGuire	19
W108Q3845	Outline of HSE plan to provide Leitrim/ West Cavan Children’s Disability Network Team with a building styled with therapy rooms and office space.	ClIr F Armstrong McGuire	19
W108Q3846	Endoscopy/Colonoscopy procedure- hospital contracts with private companies, where, what reasons and cost.	ClIr D Bree	19-20

W108Q3847	Update on discussions re the re-opening of the Hydrotherapy pool in Cregg	Cllr D Bree	20
W108Q3848	Recruitment of consultants for CAMHS ID Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal.	Cllr D Bree	20-21
W108Q3849	Medically discharged, long stay patients in each university hospital.	Cllr D Bree	21-22
W108Q3850	Day Care Hospital Services at Carndonagh Community Hospital.	Cllr A Doherty	22
W108Q3851	Are the individual needs of the person awarded Home Help hours met and are these needs updated on a monthly basis to the Home Support worker.	Cllr F Gurn	22-23
W108Q3852	Extension to Mortuary Services hours- Our Lady's Hospital Manorhamilton.	Cllr F Gurn	23
W108Q3853	Decrease in bed provision at Radharc na Sleibhte, SRU, Carndonagh.	Cllr A Doherty	23
W108Q3854	Riverwalk House/ Milltown House, update on staffing issues, MICA assessment and timeline for use.	Cllr A Doherty	23-24
W108Q3855	Oranmore Primary Care Centre update on discussions.	Cllr L Carroll	24
W108Q3856	Respite- Lifford Community Hospital area and St Joseph's catchment area.	Cllr G Crawford	24
W108Q3857	Lifford Community Hospital area day care provision.	Cllr G Crawford	24
W108Q3858	Day care Services provision for St Joseph's Stranorlar area.	Cllr G Crawford	24-25
W108Q3859	Delayed discharges in Letterkenny University Hospital.	Cllr G Crawford	25
W108Q3860	Ophthalmic services and supports in Inishowen and Donegal.	Cllr A Doherty	25-27
W108Q3861	Staffing at the Children Disability Network Teams Galway/ Roscommon.	Cllr J Connolly	27
W108Q3862	Accident and Emergency UHG 2023 attendance, waiting time and age 70+.	Cllr J Connolly	28
W108Q3863	New Primary Care/ Ambulatory Care Hub, Western Distributor Rd- Proposed floor plan, timeframe and clinical space for GPs.	Cllr J Connolly	28
W108Q3864	Galway City Plans for a Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team/ additional Day Hospital services for patients requiring Psychiatry of Later Life care?	Cllr J Connolly	28-29
W108Q3865	Performance Management and improvement unit (PMIU) at Letterkenny University hospital- terms of reference and report.	Cllr C Brogan	29-31
W108Q3866	What steps have been taken to address the vacancies in Donegal CNDT?	Cllr C Brogan	31-32
W108Q3867	Hospitals budgets, money spent, capital works, additional beds, new consultant posts and total staff.	Cllr C Brogan	32-39
W108Q3868	Update on the new community inclusion hubs in Donegal.	Cllr C Brogan	39-40
W108Q3869	Update on Primary care centre for An Spidéal?	Cllr D Ó Cualáin	40
W108Q3870	HSE role in relation to the selection and use of burial grounds?	Cllr D Ó Cualáin	40-41
W108Q3871	GUH- Winter surge plans and impact of recruitment embargo.	Cllr D Ó Cualáin	41
W108Q3872	Co Galway schools immunisations.	Cllr D Ó Cualáin	42
W108Q3873	Have the HSE any plans to hire another Pathologist to Sligo Hospital.	Cllr P Farrell	42
W108Q3874	Ballina District Hospital new extension.	Cllr J O Hara	42
W108Q3876	Number of Suicides 2019 to 2023 in the RHFV Region.	Cllr D Gilroy	42-43
W108Q3877	Patients brought by Search and Rescue to GUH in the last three years.	Cllr D Gilroy	44
W108Q3878	Cardiac Services Review/ Sligo UH Catheterization Lab/ Scanner	Cllr D Gilroy	44
W108Q3879	Chronic Disease Hub- Clarion Road Sligo, appointment of an ANP.	Cllr D Gilroy	44
W108Q3880	Escalation protocols for UHL, full capacity protocol from 2019 - 2023	Cllr S Morris	44-45
W108Q3881	Full capacity protocols UHL- How many times not carried out and why?	Cllr S Morris	45-46
W108Q3882	UHL group budget- comparison to other hospital groups since January 2019	Cllr S Morris	46
W108Q3883	Calls for support to alleviate overcrowding of the ED, UHL.	Cllr S Morris	46-47
W108Q3884	Report on the services provided at Ennistymon Community Hospital.	Cllr L Grant	47-48

Number:	QUESTION	RAISED BY
W108Q3819	Update on the progression of the proposed 50 Bed unit at the Sacred Heart Hospital Roscommon.	Cllr T Ward

The tender evaluation process has now reached a conclusion and it is intended to issue letters notifying both the successful and unsuccessful tenderers in the coming days. It is anticipated that an award of a public works contract for the contract would be completed with the successful tenderer by early April and that the contractor would be in a position to commence on site around the end of April 2024. The project will consist of several phases of works with the overall programme for all phases expected to take approximately 26 months to complete.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3820	How many older people are on waiting list for home help hours in South Roscommon and in Co.Roscommon?	Cllr T Ward
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Waiting List South Roscommon as of 31/12/2023:

No. of people waiting on new home support service (community)	9
No. of people waiting on new home support service (acute)	2
No. of people waiting on additional home support service (community)	61
No. of people waiting on additional home support (acute)	0

Waiting List Roscommon as of 31/12/2023:

No. of people waiting on new home support service (community)	11
No. of people waiting on new home support service (acute)	2
No. of people waiting on additional home support service (community)	84
No. of people waiting on additional home support (acute)	0

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3821	Can the HSE inform the members how many children have to go outside County Roscommon to avail of range of services for children with Autism, Speech and Language and Disabilities.	Cllr T Ward
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Children in Co Roscommon are supported by two teams:

Community Disability Network Team 8 covers East Galway and South Roscommon

Community Disability Network Team 9 covers Roscommon - Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Castlereah, Glenamaddy, Roscommon and Strokestown.

CDNT8 is temporarily based in Loughrea, Co Galway. Children from South Roscommon may need to travel to Loughrea for appointments, but the team do travel to Roscommon for appointments as much as possible (this includes Athlone PCC, home visits, school visits etc). HSE Estates are actively looking for a more centrally based site for CDNT8. Once this base is secured, Children will no longer have to travel to Loughrea

CDNT9 meet children on their caseload in Co Roscommon.

The only other time children might avail of services outside Co Roscommon is when they are linked with an external agency for assessments. In these situations families are asked if they are able to travel to Galway. If not, they will be met in Roscommon (Castlereah).

Primary Care Services:-

Speech and Language	Occupational Therapy	Psychology
0	0	23

No Children are sent outside the county.	OT do not out source Occupational Therapy to private service or services in other counties.	Since November 2022 to date (Oct 2023), 23 children referred to the Primary Care Child Psychology Service (Network 9) in Roscommon have been offered an Autism assessment in County Mayo. These assessments were provided by a Private Assessment Service on behalf of the Mayo/Roscommon Primary Care Services.
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J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3822	Can the HSE inform the members if the mental health services in County Roscommon have a full complement of trained staff to deal with all the patients.	Cllr T Ward
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There is currently a staffing complement of 173 Whole Time Equivalents (WTE) in Roscommon Mental Health Services. There are currently 30.5 WTE vacancies. This service makes every effort to fill temporary vacancies through the use of cross cover, locum cover and approved overtime. (As of 31/12/2023).

We are currently in the process of recruiting to these positions.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3823	Can I have update on the Plans and timeframe for the delivery of the new extension being proposed to Increase the Capacity of the Emergency Department at LUH. What form will it take, how many extra beds, consultation rooms, extra staff etc will this extension require and provide?	Cllr G McMonagle
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The planned works to the Letterkenny University Hospital Emergency Department (ED) consist of the provision of an extension to relocate existing accommodation allowing the vacated space to be reconfigured to provide a separate Paediatric Treatment Zone and additional enclosed ED single treatment rooms (6 No. to enhance the treatment of patients with infection). The extension will be connected to the existing Emergency Department in order to ensure efficiencies in staffing cover and full access to the Hospitals existing diagnostic departments. The project has been included in the HSE Capital Plan for 2024 as a new project with funding to be allocated for the procurement and engagement of a design team in 2024. It is hoped to then progress the project through the scheme design and planning permission stages with detailed design and tendering to follow in 2025.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3824	How many ICU Beds do we currently have at LUH, are the numbers sufficient to meet the needs of the hospital and has any approval been sought by SAOLTA recently to the HSE to increase the Bed capacity of the ICU at LUH?	Cllr G McMonagle
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We currently have 6 funded ICU beds. We also currently operate 4 surgical HDU beds. A submission was made to acute hospital for a reconfiguration of existing beds to deliver an integrated critical care floor including ICU and HDU beds. However this project has to go through a formal capital submission.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3825	Can I have an update on what progress has been made to date with the issues raised by the Parents of Children with Special Needs with CHO1 Management and Staff at our recent meeting, Staffing vacancies and has a review of available equipment taken place and a Risk assessment to the Children carried out?	Cllr G McMonagle
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Not available at time of issue.

W108Q3826	Has CHO1 considered the proposal from Special Needs Parent Network to Redeploy the experienced and skilled resources from Primary Care on a temporary basis to address the growing waiting list of children awaiting	Cllr G McMonagle
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	therapies and other supports focusing on and prioritising the most complex cases?	
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Not available at time of issue.

W108Q3827	On foot of recent media reports which stated "Dental service for children with additional needs is dehumanising" What protocols are in place for treating children / young people with additional needs who need a general anaesthetic for normal dental work - be it as an urgent case or routine dental care. Issues of staffing, cost, as well as waiting lists need to be addressed.	Cllr M Howard
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The HSE Mid West Dental Service has three Senior Dental Surgeons who provide a dedicated dental service for children and adults with additional needs across the HSE Mid West region (Clare, Limerick and Nth. Tipperary). In Co. Clare, the Dental Surgeon sees patients in the HSE Dental Clinics in Shannon and Ennis, four days per week.

The Snr. Dental Surgeon covering the Nth. Tipperary/East Limerick area resigned in early February 2024 and a recruitment campaign is underway to fill this vacant post.

The Dental Surgeon will assess the patient and the associated risks attached to any dental treatment that needs to be carried out. They will determine if the dental treatment can be carried out under local anaesthetic or if it needs to be carried out under general anaesthetic (GA). If a Dental GA is recommended, the patient will be added to the Dental GA treatment waiting list (the average waiting time for patients to be treated is approx. 30 months).

The HSE Mid West Dental Service has limited access to GA sessions at University Hospital Limerick & Nenagh Hospital. Patients from Co. Clare who require dental treatment under GA are added to the Limerick GA waiting list. All Dental GA sessions for children under five have to be carried out at University Hospital Limerick as there must be a Paediatric Ward on site in case of an emergency.

The waiting list for patients awaiting dental treatment under GA is prioritised according to clinical need and chronologically. However it should be noted that if a patient on the waiting list presents with an emergency situation, they will be seen as a priority. As with other specialties, wait times for dental treatment may be affected by access to theatre, staffing and other resources.

The total number of patients awaiting dental treatment under GA on the 16th February 2024 was 838 in the HSE Mid West area. This number is made up of patients (including those with additional needs) who are awaiting routine dental treatment or dental extraction under GA. Please see below a breakdown in the age profile of the patients on the Dental GA waiting list:

Age of patient	<u>Patients awaiting dental extraction under GA</u>	<u>Patients with additional needs awaiting dental treatment under GA</u>
Under 5 years	76	0
Between 5 – 16 years	637	45
Adults (medical card holders over 16 years)	17	63
Total	730	108

HSE Mid West CHO are working with their colleagues in University Hospital Limerick to address the wait time for patients on the dental GA list.

Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare

W108Q3828	Could I ask the HSE for an update on the new Xray unit in Tuam – Cost & Timeline of installation and operation.	Cllr D Killilea
<p>Following successful execution of a variation to the existing PPP Project Agreement between the HSE & PPP Co., works commenced on site to construct the new diagnostics suite and audiology unit at the Tuam primary care centre in August 2023. The works involve converting an existing GP suite to a new diagnostics suite and an existing office to a new audiology and observation room. PPP Co. appointed TH Contractors as main contractor for the project. Tuam primary care centre remains operational. Works are programmed to be completed by end of March 2024 with services anticipated to commence shortly thereafter. The project is currently on programme. The cost of the construction works and associated costs via the PPP Project Agreement is approximately €1.64 million excluding VAT.</p> <p><i>Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates</i></p>		
W108Q3829	Could the HSE confirm the charges and payment the PPP Primary Care Centre company received for services (mains water/waste water etc) for the new O Toole CNU?	Cllr D Killilea
<p>The PPP Primary Care Centre company did not receive any charges or payments for services (mains water/waste water etc) for the new O Toole CNU.</p> <p>The new water main was run on the ‘Grove side’ of the new wall during the rebuilding of the wall by a contractor engaged by the HSE. The PPP Company facilitated these works locally as necessary.</p> <p><i>Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates</i></p>		
W108Q3830	Could I ask the HSE to confirm the opening date of the new O Toole CNU in Tuam – I understand that initially 18 beds are for the transfer of patients from Aras Mhuire CNU – Can the HSE confirm that the remainder of beds will be used for a mix of Step Down and CNU or will it be CNU only given the closure of private nursing home beds within the community? Can I get confirmation that talks are progressing on funding of a respite centre for Aras Mhuire after planned closure?	Cllr D Killilea
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are at the final stages of the processing of registration by HIQA, which we hope to conclude by the end of February. • Planning on initial move in mid to late March for residents in Aras Mhuire – once they have settled will commence additional admissions • Beds will be primarily for long stay though we can if required use for other purposes – palliative/respite/short stay. • Review of use of Aras Mhuire and its future use is ongoing and all service options are being explored including short stay/respite services. <p><i>J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</i></p>		
W108Q3831	Could I ask the HSE to confirm what new developments are planned for 2024/2025 in hospitals in Galway City and County and a value and timeline on delivery please.	Cllr D Killilea
<p>GUH New Developments</p> <p>A number of key capital infrastructure enablers, which are required to support both scheduled and unscheduled care, are in progress. Some of these are subject to final approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED Women & Children’s block The proposed new Emergency Department & Women & Children’s build for University Hospital Galway will address existing infrastructural deficits; ensure compliance with National Clinical Care Standards and address service capacity and risk issues. Status: In compliance with the Public Spending Code, a Strategic Assessment-Preliminary Business Case (SA-PBC) has been completed. This was approved by the HSE Board in November 2023 and submitted to the Department of Health as Approving Authority. The Department of Health issued feedback on the SA-PBC on 31.01.24. This is currently being reviewed by Estates and GUH to update and respond back to the Department. • Ward Block / Cancer Centre 		

There have been significant challenges/risks regarding adequate space and infrastructure including bed capacity and supporting accommodation on the University Hospital Galway site.

The UHG site Development Control Plan has identified a number of key actions to enable delivery of a much needed additional ward block to address the current urgent risks and health and safety issues associated with unscheduled care. A key enabler is the provision of a multi-story clinical support & administration block. This project will be a crucial enabler to decant services in order to progress the urgent bed capacity deficiencies within GUH.

The strategic assessment for the development of a cancer centre in GUH has been submitted to the HSE Board and is awaiting approval.

A GUH capital programme oversight board was established in late 2023. There is a clinical scoping process in progress and this will be integrated as part of the Development Control Plan for GUH.

- **Replacement Laboratory facility - Integrated Clinical and Medical Laboratory Services Replacement of current infrastructure**

GUH is progressing the replacement of the entire laboratory infrastructure as it is not fit for purpose and at real risk of failing compliance with the regulation bodies.

The Strategic Assessment Report (SAR) was submitted and approved by the HSE Executive Management Team and the HSE board. It was then submitted to the Department of Health. Feedback from the Department was received on 30.01.2024. The Preliminary Business Case is being progressed and the hospital is currently reviewing the feedback from the Department.

- **Surgical Hubs**

A surgical hub in Galway will allow the Saolta region to have a dedicated area for access to surgical day procedures and thus reduce the waiting lists. This will improve waiting times for patients and allow Galway University Hospitals / Saolta University Health Care Group to meet the National Key Performance Indicators regarding Day Case Procedures. The surgical hub will be complementary to and will integrate with the Elective Hospital when it progresses and is in keeping with the long term plan for GUH.

Estimated Timeline for Completion: Q2/3 2025

- **The Elective Hospital**

This Galway centre with a planned eight operating theatres, seven endoscopy suites and nine minor operation rooms is forecast to provide 175,000 additional procedures, treatments and diagnostic appointments per year will provide better care and outcomes for all patients. The Elective Hospital will be focused on providing Day case, GI Endoscopy, minor operations, outpatient treatment and outpatient diagnostics services.

The new Hospital will deliver greater certainty for patients who will benefit from being given an appointment date in an Elective Hospital rather than being placed on a waiting list under the current system. The separation of emergency (unscheduled) and elective (scheduled) care will lead to fewer cancellations and delays for elective care caused by seasonal surges, localised outbreaks, and surges in emergency attendances.

This project is being progressed as part of the national Sláintecare implementation of three Elective Hospitals in Cork, Dublin and Galway.

- **Phase 1 OPD MPUH & Cystic Fibrosis MPUH**

The replacement of outpatient services and Adult OPD services at UHG which see the relocation of these services to MPUH to facilitate the new ED, Women's & Children's Project. This is required to meet OPD capacity requirements and reduce the risks for patients. It will have capacity to promote improved workflows and ensure an improved environment for patients & staff. It will allow for social distancing and dedicated areas for virtual clinics. It also allows for separate unit for Adult Cystic Fibrosis patients ensuring safe access to high level clinical care and enhanced patient confidentiality, privacy, dignity and overall patient experience.

Estimated Timeline for Completion: Q3 2024

OPD Phase II will be required to meet significant current demand for OPD services with additional further developments both from a regional and national perspective in Obesity, Perinatal Mental Health, Regional Memory Clinics and Dementia. It will also allow further Ophthalmology services and the planned expansion of Trauma services. The development will also take into account the increasing OPD demands associated with ANP and CNS service developments.

Estimated Timeline for Completion: Approval just received so progressing to tender.

- **Relocation of the Public Health Microbiology Laboratory (PHML)**

Relocation of the Public Health Microbiology Laboratory (PHML) which was displaced to accommodate the COVID testing equipment & laboratory.

Construction commenced November 2023, project programme for completion in August 2024.

PUH New Developments:

- Construction work will continue on the new 50 bedded replacement ward block and building work is expected to be completed in April 2024. This is a €34 million development.
- To progress the provision of additional capacity for the Emergency Department – A design team has been appointed and is currently working with a clinical team in relation to a design.
- CSSD to relocate to the under-croft area – A design team has been appointed to work with a local team.
- Approval received to purchase two properties between the Mortuary Gate and Hospital entrance. This will provide additional capacity and will provide an alternative entrance to the hospital in the future – HSE West progressing purchase.
- Upgrade of the Hospital’s Fire Alarm system is on-going in 2024.
- Review and upgrade of the Hospital Signage to be progressed.
- Progressing a dedicated area for the Ambulatory Hysteroscopy Service – procurement process completed and builder in the process of been appointed and work to commence second quarter 2024.
- Upgrade of power supply: Installation of Sub-station 2 which will provide two additional transformers for the 50 bedded ward block and future developments on the site.
- Additional Car Parking currently being progressed and will be completed in coming weeks.

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3832	Can I be provided with a status update for the planned development of all the primary care centers in Clare, and specifically the proposals for development at Ennistymon and Sixmilebridge.	Cllr C Murphy
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The HSE has recently completed a review of the Operational lease Model approach for the delivery of Primary Care Centre Accommodation at national level. This was driven by concerns about the financial viability of existing priced offers and also the desire to update and strengthen the scheme. It is now intended to reactivate locations which have not advanced in recent times. Both Sixmilebridge and Ennistymon have previously been advertised for delivery of primary care accommodation. Both locations are being prioritised for progression with a view to concluding commercial agreements during 2024. Where appropriate this may include re-advertisement of a location to enable updated submissions reflecting current market conditions. Discussions are also ongoing with a view to progressing the construction of additional accommodation (new top floor) at Station Road Primary Care Centre Ennis during 2024.

Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare

W108Q3833	In November 2021 I was provided with details of the improvements to the diabetes services in the UHL group, can I be provided with an update on how those improvements in staffing and services have impacted on the waiting list for diabetes services since they have been implemented	Cllr C Murphy
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University Hospital Limerick is at an advanced stage in the development of a Diabetes Day Care Centre. This will provide a dedicated unit for the assessment and management of people living with diabetes in the Mid-West region.

People living with diabetes will attend the centre for both urgent and planned visits to meet diabetes-related needs outside of routine scheduled care.

This will allow patients to access a full multi-disciplinary team including specialist diabetes nurses/advanced nurse practitioners, dietitians, podiatrists, psychologists, non-consultant hospital doctors, endocrinologists and administration staff.

In addition, it will provide comprehensive care for patients requiring follow-up care in addition to their routine annual diabetes review (e.g. recurrent hypoglycaemia, intensive treat-to-target patients, newly diagnosed patients requiring close follow-up for rapid treatment adjustment, application of continuous glucose monitoring systems, and crisis appointments).

Structured Education Programme

University Hospital Limerick became a DAFNE accredited centre in 2023. This education programme gives patients with diabetes the necessary skills around insulin administration. The aim of the course is to improve the health outcomes for type 1 diabetes patients by providing well-structured information and guidance. During 2023, 30 patients took part in this programme.

Waiting List

We have seen a significant improvement in the number of patients waiting for a first appointment in the adult outpatients diabetes clinic, please see below:

Year	Patients waiting for a first appointment
March 2022	573
March 2023	465
February 2024	127

Please see below for an update on staffing:

Consultants

There are 4 WTE Consultant Endocrinologists in place at University Hospital Limerick.

In addition, there is further approval for:

- 1 WTE Consultant Endocrinologist who will have a 0.5 WTE commitment to Community Healthcare Mid-West
- 0.5 WTE Consultant Endocrinologist who will have a special interest in diabetes during pregnancy.

Both of the above posts are currently being progressed through the approved HR processes.

Nursing

The Adult Diabetes Service is also supported by a dedicated team of Candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioners (cANP). There is currently 1.5 WTE cANP in post at University Hospital Limerick, 0.5 of which is an integrated care post with Community Healthcare Mid-West.

There are 6.5 Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) posts approved for University Hospital Limerick. Of these, 4.5 WTE are in post with recruitment campaigns recently completed for the remaining posts.

Nenagh Hospital has a 0.5 WTE CNS in post who also works in University Hospital Limerick. Ennis Hospital has one dedicated CNS in post and there is approval for an additional 1 WTE.

UL Hospitals Group continues to engage with the appropriate recruitment processes to ensure that all vacant posts are filled with suitable candidates.

Dietetic Posts

In December 2020, UL Hospitals Group received funding to recruit three dietetic posts for the treatment of adult diabetes.

This funding was made available through the national clinical programme for diabetes.

These posts include two senior dieticians and one staff grade dietician. The two senior dieticians are currently in post. The staff grade post is currently vacant.

Administration

There are 2 WTE administration staff supporting the diabetic service in University Hospital Limerick. There is further approval for an additional 1 WTE, however this is currently on hold due to the recruitment pause.

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group.

W108Q3834	Can be provided with details of the number of emergency asthma admissions to UHL by month for the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and, if available, 2023. If possible can I also be provided with a breakdown of those admissions by Minors/adults and by county and Municipal District area,	Clr C Murphy
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Please see below data in relation to the number of emergency asthma admissions by adult/paediatric patients to University Hospital Limerick by area of residence. Please note, this data is not recorded by municipal district area on our IT systems.

Adult Patients:

2019												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tipp. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Cork Co.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Limk City	5	5	3	5	2	5	5	7	1	4	4	3
Limk Co	7	4	3	3	7	7	2	6	6	2	3	8
Clare	6	5	6	2	0	0	3	2	3	4	0	5
Tipp. N	2	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	7
Galway Co.	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laois	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
England	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N. Ireland	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	23	20	14	11	11	13	11	16	11	12	7	23
2020												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cork Co.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Limk City	6	8	8	5	2	4	3	3	3	7	2	2

Limk Co	8	3	4	5	5	1	2	1	3	2	4	1
Clare	2	1	5	6	1	1	2	0	0	3	2	4
Tipp. N	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Galway Co.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	17	15	21	16	8	6	8	4	6	13	8	8
2021												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tipp. S	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cork Co.	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Limk City	6	2	4	5	3	4	1	2	3	3	4	1
Limk Co	6	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1
Clare	4	1	2	2	0	1	1	0	1	2	7	3
Tipp. N	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
Mayo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	16	6	12	8	6	7	3	3	8	10	14	6
2022												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dublin (S)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tipp. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Cork Co.	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Limk City	5	4	2	3	4	3	1	1	3	6	10	6
Limk Co	1	3	2	0	1	1	4	0	1	5	6	8
Clare	3	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	3	0	5
Tipp. N	1	0	2	1	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	1
North America	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	9	8	7	9	8	6	2	7	14	17	20

2023												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cork Co.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Kerry	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Limk City	5	4	4	2	1	3	1	6	1	4	2	4
Limk Co	4	3	2	0	5	3	3	5	3	4	2	7
Clare	5	0	5	2	7	4	5	3	1	8	4	10
Tipp. N.	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	1	1	0
Galway Co.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mayo	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offaly	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Meath	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	17	9	13	5	15	10	9	16	10	17	9	21

Paediatric patients:

2019												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cork Co.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Limk City	5	2	4	2	1	1	1	2	4	1	5	2
Limk Co	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	1
Clare	4	0	2	4	3	0	1	1	4	1	4	0
Tipp. N.	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Louth	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	13	7	8	8	6	4	5	7	11	5	13	3
2020												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tipp. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

Cork Co.	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Limk City	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	8	0	0
Limk Co	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	0	0
Clare	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	1	1
Tipp. N.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
TOTAL	6	9	4	0	1	1	0	2	13	15	2	1
2021												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tipp. S.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cork Co.	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Limk City	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	3	1
Limk Co	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	2	5	1
Clare	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	5	1	5
Tipp. N.	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Mayo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	3	3	4	6	3	1	1	3	7	12	7
2022												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cork Co.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Limk City	2	4	3	0	0	3	0	0	2	4	1	1
Limk Co	1	5	4	1	1	1	1	0	5	3	1	3
Clare	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	1	4	2	4	7
Tipp. N.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	4	10	7	1	4	6	2	2	11	10	8	11
2023												
Area of Residence	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

Tipp. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Limk City	3	4	1	2	5	2	1	3	3	5	4	3
Limk Co	6	4	0	0	2	3	1	1	2	3	4	6
Clare	3	4	2	0	1	1	1	1	5	3	2	1
Tipp. N.	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	3	0	1	1
Galway Co.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
North America	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	13	13	4	3	8	7	3	7	13	13	11	11

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group

W108Q3835	Can I be provided with a breakdown of the numbers by age cohort and waiting times for appointments with CAMHS for young people from Clare for the year 2022.	Cllr C Murphy
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We are unable to retrospectively identify what the waiting time was in 2022 according to age category, as the record does not exist. Records are updated in real time as children flow through the system. We can provide however, the number of children on the waiting list in 2022. Please see below table which outlines waiting list by age and waiting list figures by wait time.

Waiting List by Age

Age	Clare West (no. of children)	Clare East (no. of children)
5	1	0
6	2	2
7	4	0
8	2	4
9	1	3
10	3	3
11	3	3
12	5	5
13	9	2
14	7	1
15	3	2
16	9	4

17	7	2
Totals	56	31

Waiting List figures by wait time

	Clare West	Clare East
0 to 3 months	49	18
3 to 6 months	6	8
6 to 9 months	1	2
9 to 12 months		2
12 to 15 months		1
Total	56	31

Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare

W108Q3836	Please provide status update on the development of the Gort Primary Care Centre including timelines.	Cllr E Francis Parsons
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The HSE is in the process of developing updated documentation to support the primary care operational lease programme nationwide. It is envisaged that the Gort project will be progressed to priced offer stage before the end of the year pending completion of the documentation.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3837	Please outline the HSE's plans including timelines for the two vacant (2) x HSE owned properties on the Ennis Road Gort formally used as residences adjacent to the Mental Health centre in Gort - is this HSE owned or leased from a private provider?	Cllr E Francis Parsons
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The HSE are currently engaging with Galway County Council to ascertain if they are interested in purchasing these properties. HSE Disabilities Services had considered the properties, however this option is no longer being pursued. Galway County Council had previously sought to purchase both properties, at market value, for the provision of social housing.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3838	The Health centre in Ballygar sustained extensive fire damage in Feb 2021. Ballygar town has undergone extensive streetscape works in the past year or two to improve the attractiveness of the town and an active community engage in tidy towns initiatives. Please provide a status update on the HSE's timeline pertaining to the demolition of the extensively fire-damaged derelict HSE Health Centre on Ballygar's main street which is unsightly with hazard signs and metal barriers blocking access to the remainder of the building facility which could be put to productive use.	Cllr E Francis Parsons
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Primary Care Services are continuing to review their accommodation requirements in the Ballygar area. While rebuilding the Health Centre on the main street remains an option, we are of the opinion that the original footprint will not provide the necessary accommodation for both GP and enhanced primary care services with car parking. The HSE will look at measures to tidy up the site, improving the façade and work towards a final decision on HSE accommodation for the community of

Ballygar. Works were carried out to secure the site and make it more presentable. CHW will continue to monitor the site to ensure no further deterioration of the building.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3839	Please assure the public of accountability, transparency, and quality & standards of ongoing care by providing a detailed update on the findings of the Independent clinical care review into neonatal subgaleal haemorrhages occurring in UHG in 2022 including when the full review will be published so that details of lessons learned including any actions instituted since the review was carried out, if any, will inform the public fully.	Cllr E Francis Parsons
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The review of neonatal subgaleal haemorrhage in 2022 was undertaken because the management team in University Hospital Galway (UHG) Maternity services observed through their clinical governance process that there had been an increase in the incidents of subgaleal haemorrhage of the new-born from previous years. While this increase was well within the reported range in the international literature, the management team in UHG decided to undertake an audit of the nine cases. The aim of the audit was to provide insights into trends, root causes, and potential areas of improvement. The audit found that apart from the occurrence of instrumental vaginal delivery, there were no other apparent causative factors. Different senior obstetricians were present at all deliveries, including members of the consultant staff. These infants were admitted to the neonatal unit for observation. None of the infants had hypovolaemia, tachycardia, hypotension or a requirement for blood transfusion, and all were well on discharge. All of these cases were considered mild.

In addition, the prevalence of this condition may vary with how closely it is examined for. While the audit had not identified any specific issue of concern, a decision was made by the Saolta Group Women’s and Children’s Clinical Director to seek the assistance of the National Women’s and Infant’s Health Programme to complete an independent clinical care review of all the 9 cases.

The review has now been completed and shared with the families involved. The review found that all the cases were in the mild or minor category.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3840	What arrangements have been put in place to deal with the numbers on trolleys over the winter period at Mayo University Hospital? What is the maximum number of patients who will be accommodated on trolleys at any point? What risk assessment have been carried out to ensure that patients are not being discharged prematurely to make way for other patients?	Cllr M Kilcoyne
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The following arrangements have been put in place for the winter period in Mayo University Hospital; we have two multi-disciplinary working groups looking at all of the factors that will influence trolley numbers in the hospital. The quality groups; ‘Length of Stay Working Group’ and ‘ED Quality Improvement Group’ are looking at inpatient flow.

Length of Stay Working Group’ are focusing on the following:

- Maximizing efficient length of stay for patients regarding access to diagnostics
- Efficient ward rounds, ensuring the right patient is in the right location and the right ward
- Following up on any delays for patients internally / externally to the hospital
- Ensuring delayed discharges are at a minimum
- Reviewing and managing readmissions to ensure early discharges do not result in patient readmission

Emergency Department Quality Improvement Working Group:

The Emergency Department Quality Improvement Working Group are focusing on good flow through the department ensuring minimal numbers of patients on trolleys. Whilst there are patients who will take a longer period of care, it is maxing out on the number of patients who can be seen and transitioned through the department ensuring that we are still meeting all of our decisions on clinical prioritisation.

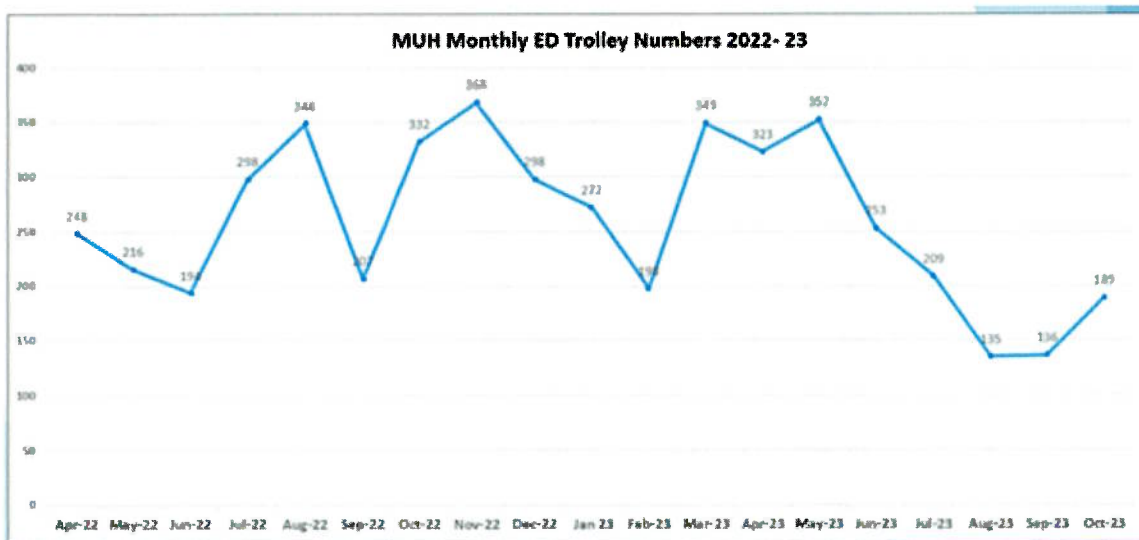
We have information for patients that will be displayed in the waiting area identifying wait times, supported the staff by putting an electronic system for viewing at all times the number of patients in the department, where those patients are and how long they have been in the department.

We are also looking at the softer elements but most important is patient engagement and patient experience in relation to our communication paths, ensuring patients have access to light refreshments while in the department and generally ensuring that patients requirements are met.

Over 75's Review Group:

We also have a specific group reviewing admissions of patients >75 years and also looking at the cause and reasons for patients being admitted to ensure we can maximise alternative pathways with the Chronic Illness Programmes that have been established. In particular looking at the Cardiology and Respiratory pathways for hospital avoidance and supported early discharges.

As previously highlighted from the hospital on a number of occasions, the full rectifying of having no patients on trolleys would be progress of a ward block in the hospital, and until that occurs we need to make sure we are dealing with every efficiency possible we can internally. Some of these take time but there has been significant progress done over the last number of months in the hospital to meet those needs. In addition there has been a significant drop in the number of patients in the Emergency Department on trolleys.



There is a process nationally that reviews the readmission rates between 7 days and 30 days. All readmissions are reviewed to ascertain if their latest admission was due to an early discharge following their original stay in hospital.

The decision to discharge patients remains a clinical decision and is taken on the basis of whether the patient is deemed fit or not fit for discharge.

Efficiencies have been put in place to ensure that patients received their diagnostics in a more timely manner and that decisions are made faster in relation to home supports and any other inputs required. However, this does not impact on the clinical decision re discharge.

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3841	How many GP positions are currently filled by locums in Mayo and how long have they been in place?	Clr M Kilcoyne
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Two GP positions are currently vacant in Mayo. One of those positions is in Achill which has been vacant since July 2020. The second is in Charlestown which has been vacant since January 2022. Both have been advertised on a number of occasions without success. However the positions are filled by GPs employed through a Locum Agency, so there has been no disruption in services to the patients.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

In Older Persons Services we have the following beds in our District Hospitals:

7 Respite Locations	Beds (14 beds in total)
Swinford District Hospital	6
Ballina District Hospital	2
Belmullet District Hospital	2
Sacred Heart Hospital	1
Dalton CNU	1
St Augustine CNU	1
St Fionnon's CNU	1

In Disability Services the following respite services are delivered by Voluntary Service Providers
Respite Information - February 2024

Service Name	Address	No. of Respite Beds in Use	Adults /Children
St. Stephen's Respite Service	35 Leichin Village, Turlough, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	4	Children
Cara Service	Carrowntreila, Ballina, Co. Mayo	3	Children
Hill View Respite Service	Convent Hill, Ballina, Co. Mayo	4	Adults
Curlew Hill Respite Service	Curlew Hill, Belmullet	4	Adults
Aishling Gheal Respite Service	Lakelawns, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo	5	Adults
Cheile Creidim Respite Services	98 Aglishe, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	4	Adults
Blath na hOige Residential Service	13 Pontoon Drive, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	1	Adults
Seaview Respite	No 7 Seaview, Newport, Co. Mayo	2	Adults
Croi Oscailte	Knock Road, Ballyhaunis	4	Adults
Willow Lodge	Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo	3	Adults
Cheshire	Bohola, Co. Mayo	2	Adults
	Total	36	

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3843	What impact will the recent cuts in health expenditure in the budget have on home helps in Mayo? How many home helps are currently employed by the HSE and how many are supplied by contractors and how many are agency staff in Mayo?	Cllr M Kilcoyne
<p>Impact of recent cuts in Health Expenditure in budget have on Home Helps in Mayo: Community Healthcare West continue to recruit Health Support Care Assistants (HSCA) throughout Mayo, Galway and Roscommon. The 2024 National Service Plan (NSP) outlines the health and social care services that will be provided nationwide with an allocated budget of €23.5billion. This is 4.6pc above the 2023 budget.</p> <p>No. of Home Helps currently employed: There are currently 219 HSCA employed. How many are supplied by contractors: There are 19 Tendered Home Support Providers providing services in Mayo. How many Agency Staff employed in Mayo: Not applicable</p> <p><i>J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</i></p>		
W108Q3844	May I have an update on the progress of the new hospital for Carrick on Shannon. I understand the site has been purchased and would appreciate the update regarding likely progress imminent.	Cllr F Armstrong McGuire
<p>The proposed 90 Bed Community Nursing Unit at Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim is currently at tender stage. This process will be completed over the coming months and approval will then be sought for the award of a public works contract for the project. It is anticipated that works would start on site in Quarter 3 of this year. The building works are then likely to take 24 months to complete.</p> <p><i>Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates</i></p>		
W108Q3845	The people of Leitrim / West Cavan ask that the Childrens Disability Network Team are provided with a building styled with therapy rooms and office space so that the time given by therapists to children is dedicated to meeting the children and not used in travelling and making notes in their cars. May I have an outline of the plan of the HSE to make the space available and so improve the services directly to the children in our care.	Cllr F Armstrong McGuire
<p>This service has recently been relocated to the premises formerly used by NoWDOC in Carrick-on-Shannon. NoWDOC moved premises in late 2023 and relocated to the Carrick-on-Shannon Primary and Mental Health Care Centre.</p> <p><i>Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates</i></p>		
W108Q3846	Which hospitals in the region have contracts with a private company, or companies, in regard to the provision of endoscopy procedures and colonoscopy procedures; where are the said procedures carried out; what is the reason for engaging private companies to do this work; what is the cost of engaging a private company or companies to do this work?	Cllr D Bree
<p>All six Saolta Hospital sites have contracts with private companies for the provision of endoscopy services (colonoscopy and gastroscopy), which were procured through a formal competitive procurement process. This is a clinical insourcing model where the procedures are performed in the hospital site at the weekends outside of core working arrangements. The companies are utilised to manage demand capacity deficits at site level. The patient groupings targeted are usually routine patients waiting longer than the national maximum waiting time targets. In 2023 5,620 additional endoscopy procedures were carried out across the group giving access to these patients which otherwise would not have occurred. The costs incurred in 2023 was €5.7 million.</p> <p><i>A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group</i></p> <p>UL Hospitals Group has experienced an increase in demand for endoscopy services through both a greater volume of urgent inpatient referrals and an increase in demand for outpatient procedures. Limits on our capacity have added to pressures on the service. To alleviate pressure on the service, to improve patient flow for patients requiring urgent inpatient procedures thus easing trolley waits, and to reduce wait times for outpatients, we secured capacity within the Bon Secours Private</p>		

Hospital Tralee to outsource at least 40 urgent outpatients weekly from the hospitals within the group. This initiative is funded through the Scheduled Care Transformation Programme and 2023 spend was €3.32m.

Separately, we have engaged EHF29 to provide a weekend insourcing service to further reduce wait times for routine endoscopy procedures and BowelScreen programme participants. As there is limited capacity available within our core activity to ensure procedures for this cohort of patients are treated within a reasonable timeframe, EHF provide additional services within our own Endoscopy units for endoscopy & colonoscopy cases. 2023 spend for this initiative was €666,000.

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group

W108Q3847	Noting that the Forum, at its meeting on the 26th of September 2023, was told that the Disability Services Manager Sligo/Leitrim was engaging with Woodbrook Care to address a number of matters in relation to the re-opening of the Hydrotherapy pool in Cregg; can today's meeting be provided with an up to date report, including dates and times of meetings between the HSE and Woodbrook in the period 1st of August 2023 to date; the notes/minutes of the meetings; and an indication as to when the hydrotherapy pool will be made available for people using Disability Services in Sligo/Leitrim.	Cllr D Bree
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By way of most recent update, the Disability Services Manager for Sligo/Leitrim has received communication from the Head of Operations of Woodbrook Care, the management company representing the owner of the property formerly known as the "Cregg Campus", confirming its position regarding the operation of its hydrotherapy pool for people with disabilities.

The Head of Operations of Woodbrook Care stated that it is currently investigating the viability of re-opening the hydrotherapy pool/unit. It was noted that considerable investment will be required in order to restore the pool to an operational standard. Ongoing costs will also be significant due to increases in wages, fuel price inflation etc.

Woodbrook Care confirmed its understanding that HSE Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo Disability Services are interested in using the hydrotherapy pool two days per week, from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Woodbrook Care has advised that it will make the unit available to the HSE Disability Services should it proceed with re-opening of the hydrotherapy pool. This would be for a specific daily rate, with the following additional conditions:

- That the HSE enter into a minimum of a 36 month contract with annual increases in rates linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- That Woodbrook Care employ a pool attendant, who will be onsite throughout the day in order to assist with hoisting people in and out of the pool where necessary, monitor the water quality and generally ensure the unit is clean, tidy and running well. This person may not be a qualified lifeguard.
- That a maximum of ten people can be in the pool at any time (this was previously the number catered for).
- That further terms and conditions may have to be agreed on.

Woodbrook Care believe they can have the unit open in 2024 further to agreement on costings and conditions with the HSE. CH CDLMS Disability Services are currently completing a business case regarding the funding/costing required in order to avail of the hydrotherapy pool. Disability Services continue to support individuals to avail of alternative hydrotherapy and swimming resources in the Sligo and/or Leitrim areas.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3848	Noting that the Forum, at its meeting on the 26th of September 2023, was told that approval was in place to progress with recruitment of consultants required for a Camhs Intellectual Disability Service in Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal; and that the recruitment process had commenced, can today's meeting be provided with a report indicating: (A) the number of consultants to be recruited; (B) when and where the vacant posts were advertised; (C) the final date for receipt of	Cllr D Bree
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applications; (E) the number of applications received; (F) when it is expected that the successful candidates will be appointed; (G) when it is expected that the service will be operational.

Question - (A) the number of consultants to be recruited

Response: - 1 replacement post to be filled

Question – (B) when and where the vacant posts were advertised:

Response – this post was advertised on the HSE Website 28.09.2023 – 12.10.2023 and also expressed to Recruitment Agencies

Question - (C) the final date for receipt of applications:

Response - 12.10.2023

Question - (E) the number of applications received:

Response - 3

Question - (F) when it is expected that the successful candidates will be appointed

Response – Interviews took place on Monday 20th November 2023 however the post was not filled from the recruitment campaign in November. 2 candidate was successful – 2 did not accept the post, 1 candidate was not successful.

Question - (G) when it is expected that the service will be operational

Response – The post has now been filled by Agency form 30.01.2024, 3 days per week. With the permanent appointment application submitted to CAAC for approval on 12.02.2024.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3849

How many medically discharged, long stay, patients are there in each university hospital in the region; How many remain in each hospital for a period in excess of 6 months, 9 months, 12 months?

Clr D Bree

Number of patients who were on the list in 2023 for Saolta by time brands.

Count of "Provider Code"	Column Labels				
Row Labels	0-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	Grand Total
Galway University Hospitals	292	14	2	3	311
Letterkenny University Hospital	720	8	1		729
Mayo University Hospital	401	4			405
Portiuncula University Hospital	98			2	100
Roscommon University Hospital	92	2	2		96
Sligo University Hospital	229	9	2	1	241
Grand Total	1832	37	7	6	1882

***Figures provided by the BIU. All data contained in this report is preliminary and may be subject to change.**

Please see link to the Patient Safety Indicator Reports for 2023:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/acutehospitals/patientcare/hospital-patient-safety-indicators-reports/saolta-university-healthcare-group/>

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

There are no medically discharged patients at University Hospital Limerick remaining in hospital longer than 6 months.

There are a small number of inpatients with a stay longer than 6 months, however, these patients have not been medically discharged.

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group

W108Q3850	<p>Restoration of Day Care Hospital Services at Carndonagh Community Hospital. What progress and -actions to restore Day Care Services have occurred following,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adoption of my motion by RHF (West) members seekingrestoration, safe delivery and provision of long-term hospital Day services in Carndonagh? 2. The correspondence forwarded to and for the attention of the General Manager, Services for Older People and the Head of Service for Older Persons from the GPs in Carndonagh Health Centre (dated Sept 2023) and the GPs in Millbrae Surgery seeking "Restoration of Services within the Community Hospital as was previous?" 3. The correspondence forwarded from a member of the Committee for the Restoration of Carndonagh Day Care Services seeking advice on the HSE Action Plan for the Restoration of Day Care Services following the mammoth attendance on Oct 6th at a public meeting demanding the restoration of this vital service? 4. The "scoping out" meeting scheduled for Nov.2023 with HSE Estates, Director of Nursing Carndonagh Community Hospital and the General Manager in Primary Care with a view to providing Day Care and Primary Care services for the Carndonagh area? 	Cllr A Doherty
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The scheduled re-opening of Day Care Services for older persons in the North Inishowen area is 26th February 2024. The Day Care Services will be delivered at the Glengad Community Centre. There is a three-year plan in place between the HSE and Glengad Community Centre. The catchment area of the North Inishowen area includes the townlands of Malin Head, Malin, Culdaff, Gleneely, Carndonagh, Clonmany and potential returning clients from the Moville area.

The restoration of the North Inishowen Day Care Services at Carndonagh Community Hospital is currently under review by the relevant stakeholders, with a plan to examine the entire site at Carndonagh Community Hospital for a potential major development to meet the expansion of HSE Community Services and a potential return of some of the services that are being delivered in the Bunrana Primary Care Centre.

All correspondence received from the GPs in the Carndonagh Health Centre, Millbrae GP Practice and the Restoration Committee members will be considered as part of this review.

A schedule of accommodation is in the process of being drafted, and will be submitted to HSE Estates to review the required accommodation, which will include the North Inishowen Day Care Service. This will be completed in conjunction with the production of a Development Control Plan (DCP) for the site and will also be dependent on capital funding.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3851	<p>Are the individual needs of the person awarded Home Help hours met on an individual and case by case basis and are these needs advised and updated on a monthly basis to the Home Support worker.</p>	Cllr F Gurn
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The Home Support hours approved and the tasks required for an individual, are based on a comprehensive clinical assessment completed by the Public Health Nurse (PHN), with supporting documentation, where relevant, from the Occupational Therapy Service, etc.

Each individual application submitted by the PHN, is then considered by the Home Support Governance Group, which consists of the Service Manager for Older Persons, the Discharge Liaison Officer, the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing and the Occupational Therapy Manager.

Once an application is approved, a Schedule of Care specific to the individual applicant is completed and provided to the Health Care Assistant (Home Support). If, at any time, the Public Health Nurse identifies a change in the individual's needs, an updated clinical assessment is completed and reviewed at the Home Support Governance meeting. Any change in an individual's care needs are incorporated into an updated Schedule of Care and is communicated, by the Home Support Resource Manager, to the allocated Health Care Assistant (Home Support).

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3852	I as a public representative and on the HSE forum are requesting an extension to the hours of the Mortuary Services at Our Lady's Hospital Manorhamilton, given the pressure on the local services.	Cllr F Gurn
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Hospital Mortuary services are clinical services where post mortems are undertaken in the appropriate clinical environment. These services are supported by experienced and skilled resources based in SUH.

There is no plan to expand these clinical services to other towns. Facilities for families are handled via Funeral Undertaker services in local communities.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3853	Radharc na Sleibhte,SRU,Carndonagh. The SRU unit in Carndonagh was a twenty bedded unit comprising 16 long term and 4 Respite beds. The centre has been reduced to an 8 bed Unit which includes only ONE respite bed. Will the HSE, Outline its programme and commitment to provide increased mental health services in Inishowen? Explain the decrease of bed provision at Radharc na Sleibhte and commit to the restoration of a twenty bed provision including Respite services and the restoration of the Day Centre to the SRU? Confirm the future HSE plans for the SRU building, the clients and staff who are presently located and working in the SRU unit at Radharc na Sleibhte?	Cllr A Doherty
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The restoration of the Day Centre has evolved to a Day Services model of care. This approach emphasises independence, choice and the development of hope and integration with the community.

Radharc na Sleibhte will provide a base for the assertive outreach treatment team who will focus on providing additional support in the community to enable people with mental health needs to continue to live in their own homes. As we continue to move away from large-scale congregated settings to providing recovery-focused support and treatments for service users in their own homes there will be a greater concentration on getting people to join local social events such as walking groups and wellness café's etc.

We would also plan to establish a Day hospital for the area which would provide an alternative to hospital admission for those who need more intensive acute care than is currently being provided by the community mental health team in a model that is similar to that established for many years in Parkview House in Letterkenny.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3854	Riverwalk House and Milltown House Have all staffing issues been addressed enabling Riverwalk Respite house to resume and provide full respite service for service users in Inishowen? What is the outcome of the specialist Mica/Defective Block assessment of Milltown House including the Upgrade works required, and the HSE response and timeline for utilising the centre including the use of the Hydrotherapy facility in Milltown House?	Cllr A Doherty
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A structural engineers report including specialist MICA testing of the blockwork has been completed in respect of Milltown House. The report has identified low levels of MICA which might be addressed in the short term by a re-render of the outer leaf and then monitored in the medium / longer term. The report also recommended the demolition of a small extension. An in house services review has also been carried out recommending extensive upgrade to all mechanical and electrical services. A fire report has also identified fire safety upgrades. This is likely to be a major refurbishment project including all

of the above, lift access for the bedrooms and possibly separating the site for two occupancies if the pool is managed by another party.

The final scheme and schedule of accommodation for the facility needs to be approved locally and then a funding submission bid will be put forward.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3855	I was advised by the Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates on 26th September that a review of commercial terms for proposed Primary Care Centres "will be concluded in the coming weeks" , that was eight weeks ago. Furthermore I was advised that "it is intended to close out on the Oranmore project over the coming weeks and before the end of 2023 the latest in accordance with the national position". What discussions if any have taken place with the developer in the last eight weeks? Have the HSE Capital & Estates held any discussions with alternative developers or sought out alternative sites?	Cllr L Carroll
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A number of developers had raised concerns about the financial viability of some intended Primary Care Projects and sought improved commercial terms due to various economic factors since submission of their priced offers. This resulted in an overall national review of the operational lease model. It has now been agreed that there will be no renegotiation of commercial terms in this manner and that schemes will either have to progress on current terms in agreed timelines or be re-advertised. The outcome to this process only finally concluded in December 2023. Correspondence is due to be issued to the developers of relevant projects in the coming weeks in this regard. The HSE remains fully committed to the delivery of a Primary care Centre in Oranmore and to reactivating this project shortly.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3856	Respite services Lifford Community Hosp area and St Joseph's catchment area. As St Joseph's Hospital was providing much needed respite care to patients from the general Finn Valley area where now are such services being provided and what capacity for this provision of care is available.	Cllr G Crawford
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Following an extensive search of the Finn Valley area for appropriate premises for the delivery of day care services for older people in the catchment area, a suitable facility has been identified by HSE Estates in the Crossroads and Killygordon Enterprise (CAKE) building in Killygordon.

Works are progressing well on the building, with a view to opening it for day care services in Quarter 2 of this year when all the works have been completed.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3857	Lifford Community Hospital area day care provision. Following up on several questions on this subject and the necessity for such service has anything occurred to delay the dates given.	Cllr G Crawford
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The Habinteg facility at Ballyduff Park in Lifford has been identified as a suitable location for the provision of day services for older people in the Lifford/Stranorlar catchment area. Infection Prevention and Control compliance work is ongoing in order to recommence Day Care Services as soon as possible. It is envisaged that Day Services will open in Lifford by the end of Quarter 1, 2024

In the interim, service users are availing of day services in the voluntary day centres in Letterkenny, Newtoncunningham, St. Johnston, Killygordon and Cloghan.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3858	Day care Services provision for St Joseph's Stranorlar area. What progress has been made in this regard.	Cllr G Crawford
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Following an extensive search of the Finn Valley area for appropriate premises for the delivery of day care services for older people in the catchment area, a suitable facility has been identified by HSE Estates in the Crossroads and Killygordon Enterprise (CAKE) building in Killygordon.

Works are progressing well on the building, with a view to opening it for day care services in Quarter 2 of this year when all the works have been completed.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3859	Over the course of year to date how many discharges have been delayed in UHLetterkenny due to lack of Step down availability or home care provision.	Cllr G Crawford
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2023	Number of Delayed Transfer of Care by reason	Total BDL 2023
DTOCA5	Application submitted, funding approved but patient waiting for carer availability for HSP	183
DTOCB14	Awaiting step down to Community Nursing unit/District Hospital/HSE facility	357
DTOCC3	Awaiting rehabilitation in designated older persons beds (under governance of Consultant Geriatrician) in community setting	12
	Outcome Total	552

Please see link to the Patient Safety Indicator Reports for 2023:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/acutehospitals/patientcare/hospital-patient-safety-indicators-reports/saolta-university-healthcare-group/>

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3860	What Ophthalmic services, supports, personnel visits, clinics are available, accessible and provided by the HSE for clients in Inishowen? Where are the supports located and how often are they available? Outside of Inishowen, what and where are Ophthalmic services provided in County Donegal?	Cllr A Doherty
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Within the Inishowen area, the Primary Care Community Ophthalmology Service currently operates clinics in Carndonagh and in Buncrana. The details of these clinics are as follows;

Carndonagh

- There are two clinic rooms.
- One optometrist operates twice monthly clinics, for children only.
- A second optometrist operates monthly clinics, for children only.
- An orthoptist, who is due to return to work shortly following statutory leave, operates twice monthly clinics. The majority of service users attending these clinics are children, however, some adult service users also attend them.

Buncrana

- There are three clinic rooms.
- Two optometrists each operate weekly clinics, for children only.
- One orthoptist, who is due to return to work shortly following statutory leave, operates weekly clinics. The majority of service users attending these clinics are children, however, some adult service users also attend them.

- A second orthoptist operates twice monthly clinics. The majority of service users attending these clinics are children, however, some adult service users also attend them.

Outside the Inishowen area, the main hub for the delivery of Community Ophthalmic service is at Eye Clinic, St Conal's in Letterkenny with outreach clinics also provided in Dungloe, Donegal town and Lifford. The details of these clinics are as follows;

Dungloe

- There are 1.5 clinic rooms.
- One optometrist operates a monthly clinic, for children only.
- One orthoptist, who is due to return to work shortly following statutory leave, operates twice monthly clinics. The majority of service users attending these clinics are children, however, some adult service users also attend them.

Donegal Town

- There are two clinic rooms.
- One optometrist operates a weekly clinic.
- One orthoptist operates a weekly clinic.

Lifford

- There are two clinic rooms.
- One orthoptist operates a weekly clinic.

Primary Care Community Ophthalmology Services are also provided in St. Conal's Hospital and Letterkenny University Hospital;

- There is 1 WTE Consultant Ophthalmologist based in St. Conal's Hospital with additional agency medical cover provided to cover vacant post. A submission for a 2nd permanent Consultant Ophthalmologist post has been completed
- Three Consultant Ophthalmologists, from Sligo University Hospital, operate monthly clinics in St. Conal's Hospital.
- A Non Consultant Hospital Doctor (NCHD), from Sligo University Hospital, operates twice weekly emergency clinics in St. Conal's Hospital.
- Minor ophthalmic operations are carried out twice monthly in St. Conal's Hospital.
- Laser treatment is carried out twice monthly in St. Conal's Hospital.
- One weekly session of Intravitreal injections is delivered, for Diabetic patients only.
- Cataract surgery is carried out once a month in Letterkenny University Hospital (LUH).

- Minor ophthalmic operations are carried out once a month in LUH.
- There are urgent consultations for adult, paediatric and neo-natal in-patients in LUH.
- Three orthoptists deliver sessions, five days per week, in addition to operating outreach clinics.
- Ophthalmic clinical nurse specialist, ophthalmic nurse and staff nurse supports are all provided.
- The services of an ophthalmic technician are available to service users. The technician also has administrative support.
- Visual field tests, Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) scans and Corneal Topography are carried out.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3861	<p>Can the Forum be provided with the full staffing cohort currently employed at each of the following Children Disability Network Teams?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Galway Children’s Disability Network Team 4 • Galway City West Children’s Disability Network Team 5 • Central Galway and Galway City East Children’s Disability Network Team 6 • North Galway Children’s Disability Network Team 7 • East Galway and South Roscommon Children’s Disability Network Team 8 • North Roscommon and North East Galway Children’s Disability Network Team 9 	Clr J Connolly
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	CDNT 4 West Galway WTE	CDNT 5 Galway City West WTE	CDNT 6 Central Galway and Galway City East WTE	CDNT 7 North Galway WTE	CDNT 8 East Galway and South Roscommon WTE	CDNT 9 Roscommon & North East Galway WTE
Speech & Language Therapists	3	5.2	7.2	4.5	3.6	3
Occupational Therapists	2	2.77	5.7	4.3	2.56	3
Psychologists	2.9	3	5.57	3.9	2.5	1.6
Physiotherapists	1	1.8	3.7	3.8	1.75	1
Nursing	0.94	0.5	1.3	0	1	1.75
Behaviour Support	0	1	1	0.4	0	0
Social Workers	0	2	2.5	1.8	0	1.3
Preschool liaison teachers/Supports Advisor	0	0.83	0.5	0.81	1	0
Clerical Support	2.4	2.6	2.5	4	3	3.94
CDNM	1	1	1	1	1	1

Whole time equivalent posts noted above include: therapy assistants, staff grade, and senior grade disciplines for Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy & Psychology.
Allocation of current staff employed at month end Jan 2024.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3862	How many patients have attended the Accident and Emergency Unit at University Hospital Galway in 2023 up to and including October 31st. How many of the patients had a waiting time in excess of 9 hours? How many of the patients were over the age of 70 and how many patients aged over 70 had to wait in excess of 9 hours?	Cllr J Connolly
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Please see below table. The total attendances for 2023 was 75,234.

The total number of patients waiting in excess of 9 hours amounts to 26,561.

The number of patients who attended who were greater than 70 years old was 14,906. Of these patients, 8,158 waited in excess of 9 hours.

1st January – 31st December, 2023 GUH Emergency Department	Total 2023
Total Attendances	75,234
Patients waiting >9 hours	26,561
Patients >70 years old	14,906
Patients >70 years old waiting >9 hours	8,158

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3863	Can the Forum be updated on the proposed floor plan for the new Primary Care/ Ambulatory Care Hub at the Gateway Business Park, Western Distributor Rd, Galway? Can members be advised if provision will be made within the Hub for clinical space for general practitioners? Lastly can it be confirmed that the Hub will be operational by mid-2025?	Cllr J Connolly
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The development of the building in Block A, Galway West Business Park, Knocknacarra is currently being progressed under the HSE capital programme to accommodate the integrated care teams for Chronic Disease and Older Persons, the West Galway Community Health Networks, supporting diagnostic services and the Knocknacarra & Salthill Primary Care Teams.

The building in Knocknacarra has just entered the planning process (Planning Ref. no. 23/60113.) and timeframe for being operational will depend on outcome of same. Subject to planning decision it is anticipated the building will be operational at the latter end of 2025. A Further Information Request (FI) was received from Galway City Council on 21st January 2024. A meeting has recently been held with the planning authority to seek clarification on the FI and a formal response is due to be submitted imminently

The primary focus of the Knocknacarra building is for the provision of an Enhanced Community Care Hub including clinical treatment rooms for Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language, Dietetics, Podiatry, Public Health Nursing and Social work. The HSE have strongly supported co-location of GP practices within Primary Care Centres, however in this case given the range of scale of HSE Services to be accommodated, there was no capacity for a GP surgery.

This hub will also provide clinical treatment rooms for patients under the care of the Cardiology, Respiratory and Endocrinology teams. The centre, which will provide services for both children and adults, will also comprise of diagnostics suites to include X ray, spirometry and cardiac diagnostics.

The centre will further provide support accommodation including multi-disciplinary meeting rooms and ancillary functions.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3864	Can the forum be updated on plans to develop a Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team for Galway City and additional Day Hospital services for patients requiring Psychiatry of Later Life care?	Cllr J Connolly
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Community Healthcare West are currently working with the National Office in seeking approval to recruit 5 new posts to develop a Mental Health Services Crisis Team for Galway City. These posts, 1 CNM2, 3 CNS's and 1 Senior Social Worker will

be supported by a Clinical Lead Consultant Psychiatrist, which has been prioritised for recruitment through the Mental Health Haddington Road Funding allocation. Initial talks are scheduled to take place on Monday 26th February 2024 with the National Clinical Programme Lead. This would be a welcome development for the area.

In relation to additional Day Hospital Services for patients requiring Psychiatry of Later Life Care we have been advocating for additional resources through the yearly estimates process for the past number of years and this has also been included in the Estimates Process for 2024 as well as through the Winter Initiative Funding Process but to date we have not received the necessary funding to advance this project.

J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West

W108Q3865	Has the terms of reference been agreed and When do we expect the conclusion of the report of the Performance Management and improvement unit (PMIU) at Letterkenny University hospital in the areas of the Emergency Department, delayed discharges, GPs and pre-hospital care , waiting list reduction, primary care , community care ?	Clr C Brogan
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The PMIU Team commenced in Letterkenny University Hospital in November 2023 and a Terms of Reference was agreed. The HSE National Team reviewed the day to day functioning of LUH and the Community Services within a leadership, management, operational and clinical context to consider how improvements in LUH may be enabled in the short term. Critically, it sought to identify what is required locally, regionally and nationally to support operational and clinical effectiveness on a sustained basis across LUH and the Community Services. Key drivers of the Review Process are the delivery of safe effective care for the population served by LUH and the close, integrated and patient centred collaboration with Community Operations in CHO 2.

The primary focus remains on implementing a purposeful action plan aimed at delivering sustained improvements with a focus on quality patient care. However, the PMIU Team also sought to harness and support what is working well as part of an overall improvement plan.

The key focus areas highlighted are:

- System control and a Navigational Hub
- Enhancing patient flow to meet admission demand
- Patient Flow Process Improvement (Pull Approach, Flow Meetings & Huddles, Roles & Responsibilities, Escalation Processes)
- Discharge Process Improvement (Discharge before 11am)

The duration of the team’s engagement was from Friday 3rd November to Friday 22nd December 2023. Week 1 of the engagement sought to develop a detailed set of data analytics to aid focus on the primary areas for improvement and set out a detailed timeline plan of the work streams over the subsequent 6 weeks.

On the 24th January 2024, there was a 30 Day Report Out with the Rapid Improvement Team, Saolta Management, local Management & the Community Team.

Improvement Scope, Objectives & Metrics

61 patients (median value) are admitted daily to Letterkenny University Hospital via the Unscheduled Care pathway (acute medicine, emergency stay, elective stay). Daily discharges do not meet this daily demand, resulting in patients boarding in the Emergency Department and Acute Medical Assessment Unit, admitted to ward overflow beds, or transferred to other surge locations for overnight boarding. Additionally, most discharges happen too late in the day, leading to delays in transferring patients from the acute floor to inpatient wards.

To address this demand and discharge mismatch, it was determined that the scope of work would be from a **decision to admit to LUH to discharge from LUH**, with an improvement focus on enhancing patient flow processes at LUH, specifically:

The following improvement metrics will be tracked and monitored against the targeted patient flow domains:

- Time waiting for admission to beds from ED and from AMAU
- Discharges before 11am – 33%

- Admissions before 12pm – 33%
- Number of Weekend discharges - 30% improvement

A number of actions were identified and these are being reviewed at the weekly scheduled meeting with the Rapid Improvement Team, the Community and local Hospital Management.

Benefits to date:

- There has been a significant drop in 8am Trolley numbers in October and November.
- There has been a reduction of the number of over 75 year olds waiting for more than 24 hours
- There has also been a significant improvement in the overall number of patients waiting for more than 24 hour which reduced from 200 in September down to 39 in November.
- There has also been a reduction in ambulance turnaround times.

8am Trolleys September - December 2023		ED Attendances September - December 2023	
September	385	September	4,292
October	253	October	4,455
November	237	November	4,333
December	369	December	4,548
Total	1,244	Total	17,628

Table 1 8am Trolley Numbers and ED Attendances September 2023 to December 2023

Source of data BIU

	HPVP > 24 hrs Breaches	HPVP > 24 hrs Breaches > 75
September	200	70
October	107	28
November	39	11
December	120	37
Total	466	146

Table 2 >24 hour PET Breaches and >24hr >75 Years PET breaches

Source of data HPVP

A follow up 60 Day Report Out is scheduled for the 28th February 2024.

Separately figures from 2023 show that Letterkenny University Hospital made significant progress in reducing trolley numbers at the hospital last year.

Letterkenny University Hospital continued to see high attendances across 2023 with a particular rise in older patients who were admitted for care.

Total attendance at the Emergency Department in Letterkenny last year reached 51,822, a 9pc increase on the previous year.

The number of over 75 year olds attending the emergency department increased by over 7pc in 2023.

However, despite the increase in attendance there has been a 15pc drop in the number of patients waiting on trolley's each day in 2023.

Letterkenny University Hospital has also achieved significant improvements in waiting lists over the course of 2023. LUH has reduced total outpatients waiting by 13pc over the course of the year. The hospital also decreased the number of patients waiting greater than 15 months by 50pc.

Letterkenny University Hospital also achieved significant improvement in treating long waiters with a 78pc reduction in the overall number of patients waiting greater than 3 years.

The hospital also reduced the total inpatient waiting lists by 47pc last year.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3866	Can we have an updated report on what steps have been taken to address the huge concerns around the re-deployment of and recruitment to fill the vacancies in Donegal CNDT?	Cllr C Brogan
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The Human Resources Department is very aware of the challenging workforce environment which is being experienced in our CDNTs at present. In response, all and every avenue to attract candidates to work in our services is being actively explored.

Specifically the HR Department in Donegal have prioritised recruitment campaigns to fill vacancies in the Donegal Children Disability Network Teams, and have implemented a number of initiatives recently to promote the opportunities available in the CDNTs and attract candidates.

This campaign will facilitate any interested person to submit a CV to their local HR department for consideration, and interviews will then be arranged.

CDNT Teams Recruitment

There are a number of specific actions which we are undertaking as follows.

- CHO1 HR continued focus on establishing panels across all grades – rolling campaigns.
- Posts expressed to all panels by CHO1 HR in an effort to fill.
- Weekly report received by CHO1 HR from National Recruitment Services (NRS) on posts they are expressing to their panels.
- Posts returned as “unable to fill” now standardly re-offered to panels as they are formed.
- CHO1 HR interviews taking place routinely across all grades for CDNTs.
- Working with CDNT National Recruitment Campaign – 87 valid applications received.
The local HR Department will now make the arrangements to set up interview dates.

Media Campaign

- The HR Department in CH CDLMS ran a bespoke media campaign in October advertising CDNT recruitment campaigns across the CHO1 area. CHO1 media campaign ran for 4 weeks from 17.10.2023 – CHO1 newspapers x 5; radio stations x 4; social media.
- A “Home for Christmas” campaign ran in local newspapers throughout CHO1 over 2 week Christmas/New Year period.
- Staff CHO1 Facebook page updated with information on CDNT posts on an ongoing basis & staff actively encouraged to repost. Followers have increased to 6,600 in recent weeks.
- All & any enquiries re posts are being followed up by CDNMs & HR staff with bespoke interview arrangements made as required.
- Monthly joint meetings on recruitment & retention held by CHO1 Disability Services & HR department.
- Engaging with Donegal Co Council to advertise posts on the Lookwest.ie website which is managed by the Western Development Commission.

Job Fairs

- The CDNT Service and HR Department attended the ATU Job Fair on the 23rd October to promote roles within the CDNT Service.

- Donegal Healthcare Jobs Fair took place on 21.11.2023 which was organised by the CH CDLMS in collaboration with the Inishowen Development Partnership. A number of expressions of interest were received at the event which will be actively followed up by the HR Department. It was attended by 2275 adults from the general public & 183 secondary school pupils from the five colleges in the area. This was also attended by HR and Disability Services.
- We also attended the ATU Nursing Fair on 29.11.2023.
- HR and CDNT Representatives attended the “London Irish Centre Event” on the 8th February to promote careers in the CH CDLMS area. The event was a Donegal promotion event focusing on opportunities to live work and invest in Donegal.

Education

- Bursary initiative with ATU, Letterkenny & Coventry University – 23 candidates awarded bursary in OT, PT & Dietetics. 7 coming on stream in 2024 & 16 in 2025. Next phase of scheme to be launched shortly.

We will continue to work with our disability services colleagues on all and every opportunity to promote our services and recruit and retain staff.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3867	Can I have an updated report on the University Hospital budgets allocated within the Saolta group in the last 4 years and the actual total monies spent in each hospital at year end, the capital works programme and additional beds to each University Hospital for the last 4 years and how many new consultants post have been approved since the new consultants contract come in, and how many have filled in each area with the total amount of staff employed in each hospital?	Cllr C Brogan
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Allocated Budgets and Expenditure Saolta Hospitals:

2019 to 2022 Actual v Budget Expenditure

	2019			2020		
	Actual	Budget	Var	Actual	Budget	Var
Galway University Hospital	364,417,061	363,869,572	547,489	398,026,629	398,000,460	26,169
Sligo University Hospital	149,126,329	145,038,080	4,088,249	159,463,094	159,556,293	-93,198
Letterkenny University Hospital	146,929,962	142,759,800	4,170,161	156,653,541	156,508,685	144,856
Mayo University Hospital	106,961,059	106,859,546	101,513	119,094,120	119,093,659	461
Portiuncula University Hospital	73,789,731	73,212,241	577,490	83,992,798	83,388,588	604,210
Roscommon University Hospital	25,864,660	24,864,225	1,000,435	28,092,650	28,236,592	-143,942
Saolta HQ	8,702,652	9,660,389	-957,737	10,890,493	12,334,794	-1,444,301
Result	875,791,454	866,263,854	9,527,601	956,213,325	957,119,071	-905,746

	2021			2022		
	Actual	Budget	Var	Actual	Budget	Var
Galway University Hospital	447,528,809	447,529,293	-484	480,706,093	452,414,959	28,291,134
Sligo University Hospital	169,540,586	169,541,522	-936	191,152,404	176,510,323	14,642,082
Letterkenny University Hospital	178,814,939	178,815,457	-518	201,438,073	179,939,024	21,499,049
Mayo University Hospital	133,316,359	133,316,615	-256	149,831,575	132,308,463	17,523,112
Portiuncula University Hospital	92,831,956	92,831,199	757	104,831,416	92,576,499	12,254,917
Roscommon University Hospital	30,696,991	30,696,430	561	36,644,045	32,191,311	4,452,734
Saolta HQ	11,977,504	11,928,047	49,457	12,581,590	16,001,903	-3,420,313
Result	1,064,707,144	1,064,658,563	48,581	1,177,185,197	1,081,942,482	95,242,715

Capital Works Programme and Additional Beds.

Galway University Hospital	Year	Build
<p>Additional works took place funded by AMRIC for the upgrade of bathrooms/ensuites, replacement of ED X Ray room funded through the Equipment Replacement Programme and other works through minor Capital funding such as window replacements, roof repairs, lighting upgrades, Air Handling unit replacements etc.</p>	2023	Radiation Oncology Centre opened 2023
	2023	Winter Works ED – Site Clearance
	2023	MTHW (medium temperature hot water) system - risk management - Phase 1a complete. Phase 1b main works complete. Phases 2a, 2b & 2c complete.
	2023	Pneumatic Tube Upgrades
	2023	Home from Home Birthing Suite UHG
	2022	Cardiothoracic Ward opened Q2 2022 (Increase from 10 beds to 13)
	2022	Temporary ED opened October 2022 (Replacement accommodation). GUH has utilised older areas for escalation space. While these are not new beds they have created 17 new spaces.
	2022	Replacement of Orthopaedic Theatres x 2 opened Q2 2022
	2022	Development and delivery of a regional fertility hub /Department of Reproductive Medicine
	2022/2021	Lift Replacement/Upgrades GUH
	2021	Hybrid Endovascular Theatre/Vascular Suite, UHG operational late 2021
	2021	New Children Adult Sexual Assault Treatment Service facilities (Barnahus, SATU)
	2021	Block A Merlin Park Office Upgrades (Building, Electrical & Mechanical)
	2021	Unit 8 & CF Upgrade
	2021	Medical Plant Upgrades
	2021	Medical Records Merlin Park Refurb
	2020/2021	Secured offsite accommodation in Dangan – relocated Finance Department
	2020	Laboratory works included housing /accommodation of Alinity Machine for Covid-19 Testing.
	2020	Laboratory works included replacement of Mortuary
	2020	Laboratory works included redesign and relocation of Central Laboratory Reception

The capital works in MUH are as follows

Year	Spend
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upgrade of two new hospital entrances and registration area, freeing up space in ED. - Building of a modular office block accommodating @ 26 staff - Internal renovation to create a 5 bed CCU from existing 6 bed ward. - Renovation of St Johns Ward in SHH for acute patients (28 beds in use) - Major renovation of two large medical ward in MUH to meet current IPC standards. - Replacement of windows in the 1980 block including 3 large -Erection of temporary Covid assessment unit (now Ambulatory ED)
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of windows Wards the OPD and radiology department.
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Starting of electrical upgrade (major and low volte) of the entire site (ongoing) - Internal upgrade of the radiology department to develop the interventional radiology service - Renovation of endoscopy to facilitate 3 treatment room
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renovation of internal spaces to create 5 bed Medical day unit - Building of CT unit to accommodate replacement CT scanner - Internal renovation of medical ward to create 2 new isolation rooms. - Securing off site office accommodation

Sligo capital works that had additional beds in past 4 years

- **ED Modular Unit**

Modular Building was opened in 2022 to provide for new registration, waiting room and triage and minors and staff facilities. In addition, internal works in existing ED were complete to allow for a separate Paediatrics treatment area and waiting room. An additional 8 treatment spaces were achieved with multiple isolation treatment spaces.

ICU isolation Rooms:

Construction of new 4 bed unit complete, commissioned and opened in January 2023. Detail Design for Minor Capital/AMRIC Works to remainder of existing ICU is currently being completed, expected to proceed to tender and be complete in 2024 subject to confirmation of funding.

Please see attached full Capital Works update.

42 Bed Block Development	<p>This development will provide 42 additional bed spaces and additional shell-and-core area for future development of Cardiology CT and Expansion of Day Services.</p> <p>Tender for Main Contractor in progress and due back early March 2024. Tenders for Reserve Specialists (Mechanical and Electrical Contractors) to issue February with return date early April. Completion of Business Case will follow return of all tenders. Project expected to proceed to site Q3 2024.</p>
Multi-storey car park	<p>Construction has commenced on the expansion of car park facilities on the site. Phase 1 is complete and in use, remainder of car park due to open February 2024.</p>
Covid related works	<p>A planning application for associated Covid related works to the front entrance of the hospital has been granted permission and the works themselves will be incorporated into the Medical Block project.</p>
Multi-Service Block Development	<p>A Greenfield site has been earmarked on the campus for a 147 bed development. This development will house Radiology, ED, Paediatrics, Obstetrics, Surgical wards, Operating theatres (8no.) and ICU.</p> <p>These specialties reflect the main priorities for development as identified in the DCP brief.</p>

	<p>Stage 2a report completed and submitted to HSE Estates in 2018.</p> <p>Business Consultant appointed and development of Preliminary Business Case is underway. Stakeholder engagement ongoing to verify findings of recently completed demand/capacity model. Following this, updating of costs and feasibility study will take place.</p> <p>National Approval and capital budget for this project will be confirmed on completion of this report</p> <p>The timeframe for the project will be dependent on national funding/approval but is projected to be 5-8 years.</p>	
2nd CT Scanner	Design team appointed and Stage 2a underway; Tender for CT element of project to be fast tracked and be complete by end March with construction complete September 2024; 2nd CT PO to be raised once 2024 allocation received. Nuclear Medicine extension expected to proceed through planning application process in 2024.	
Renal Dialysis Unit Expansion	<p>An interim modular-type project to provide 4 additional bay is in design development, Design Team and modular supplier are appointed, planning application has been granted and the , project is expected to be fully completed by Q4 2024.</p> <p>The project for the new Renal Dialysis unit proposes a new building to provide a total of 20 Renal Dialysis treatment stations as well as outpatient services and associated admin and staff welfare facilities. Initiation approval has been received and funding request to complete an initial feasibility study is due to commence Q1 2024.</p>	
CSSD upgrade	Tender process and appointment of Contractor for Phase 1 complete and works to include provision of 4 washers is to commence imminently and be complete by end Q1 2024. Elliott Properties in the contractor on site and are on track to completed the Phase 1 of the CSSD upgrade in May 2024. The design development is currently underway for the final upgrade of the CSSD at SUH which is Phase 2 of the Project. It is expected to have this project tendered in Q3 of 2024 to get to site before the year end.	
Ophthalmic Injection/Theatre Suite	Project now includes for an upgrade of the macular injection suite and provision of a second Theatre. Design Team appointed and extra footprint required outside department; incorporate 1 extra floor onto Nuclear Medicine building proposed.	
Decarbonisation Pathfinder Project	This is a National pilot project with SEAI to improve energy efficiency and meet climate action targets. Reduction of carbon footprint by 50% by 2030 SUH is part of the HSE Decarbonisation Pilot Pathfinder Programme and a Capital Submission for funding to progress Phase 1 of the works has been approved. Works consist of Roof and window replacements; Pump cavity insulation; BMS updates; Heat pumps; PV panels; overcladding. Repairs of existing flat roof has commenced in Q1 2024.	
26 Offsite Acute Beds	Refurbish ward at St John's to provide additional 26 medical beds under SUH Governance to meet increasing demand for inpatient beds. Design Team appointed. Detailed Design signed off by HSE project team and Acute Service. Project Tendered and due back end of February 2024. Current Rehabilitation ward located in the wing of St. Johns Hospital to be refurbished to decant. Awaiting funding approval to proceed to Construction stage.	
ICT Infrastructural Upgrade Works	The project proposes the provision of a fit for purpose ICT infrastructure which will support the smooth operation of all existing Hospital operations and will facilitate ease of expansion / adaption of the Hospital into the future. EHealth funding has been made available to appoint a Consultant to progress the initial	

	design and a tender process for this consultant has been finalised, appointment is pending and design work will commence on the project in Q1 2024.
Pharmacy	Initial review of existing aseptic compounding unit infrastructure underway, in order to bring same in line with NCCP requirements. Site specific User Requirement Specification (URS) has been completed by national Estates lead and initial feasibility studies are currently underway. Capital Submission for agreed solution expected to be complete in Q2 2024.

LUH:

Since 2020, LUH have an additional 36 beds. 20 of these are in Medical 6. 16 in Medical 7. Both these wards are new and were built during the Pandemic.

**Letterkenny University Hospital
Accommodation Projects Jan 2024**

	Project Title	Brief Description	Funding Model	Status	PM	Timeline
1	Physio/OT		Major C	WIP. Stage 2c to be completed in Q4 2023. Tender to proceed subject to approval and funding. Due to commence in Q1 2024.	MG	WIP
2	Infusion Unit	LUH Project with internal reconfiguration	TBC	Complete.	PB	WIP
3	Renal Dialysis Expansion	Expansion and reconfiguration of existing Renal facilities.	Major C	WIP. Commencement date delayed due to cost increase. Stage 2A report awaiting national approval.	MG	WIP
4	Lab Expansion - Microbiology	HSE Estates Project.	TBC	WIP. Contract on track.	MG	WIP
5	Paeds OPD	Off site location	TBC	Project Team in Place. LMM appointed as HSE Estates Project Manager. Preliminary layouts being worked through.	PB	Immediate
6	Medical Records Storage	Large footprint storage unit is required to replace existing stores. Some existing stores not fit for purpose.	TBC	Project Team in place. Option appraisal complete and preferred option is now agreed. Sent to SAOLTA for approval	PB	Immediate
7	Pharmacy Aseptic Unit	HSE Estates Project.	Major C	Project Team in place. Location option approved by stakeholders and DT. Stage 1 report approved. Proceeded to scheme design.	MG	WIP
8	Orthodontics Expansion	BC sent to SAOLTA for consideration.	TBC	Project Team in Place. Preliminary capital submission approved by National HSE Estates. Detailed submission	SM	Immediate

				completed and sent in Aug 2023.		
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RUH:

RUH is currently undergoing an Equipment Replacement Project of its CT Scanner, which has been in use since 2007. This project is expected to take 6 months.

There are no Capital Programmes on site at present or none planned for the near future. We are currently awaiting meeting to agree Spatial Plan for RUH which will inform us in relation to future developments and projects.

The Palliative Care Services Unit at RUH opened in February, 2023 which has 8 inpatient beds. The Unit was built by the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation and revenue and staffing costs funded through RUH/HSE.

PUH:

PUH opened 12 additional beds in 2023 comprising of 8 single rooms and 2 x2 bedded rooms. This was done by repurposing the OPD Department. It was funded by HSE Estates and funding for staffing was also received for these beds.

The CT and Ultrasound area opened in 2019.

PUH New Developments:

- Construction work will continue on the new 50 bedded replacement ward block and building work is expected to be completed in April 2024. This is a €34 million development.
- To progress the provision of additional capacity for the Emergency Department – A design team has been appointed and is currently working with a clinical team in relation to a design.
- CSSD to relocate to the under-croft area – A design team has been appointed to work with a local team.
- Approval received to purchase two properties between the Mortuary Gate and Hospital entrance. This will provide additional capacity and will provide an alternative entrance to the hospital in the future – HSE West progressing purchase.
- Upgrade of the Hospital's Fire Alarm system is on-going in 2024.
- Review and upgrade of the Hospital Signage to be progressed.
- Progressing a dedicated area for the Ambulatory Hysteroscopy Service – procurement process completed and builder in the process of been appointed and work to commence second quarter 2024.
- Upgrade of power supply: Installation of Sub-station 2 which will provide two additional transformers for the 50 bedded ward block and future developments on the site.
- Additional Car Parking currently being progressed and will be completed in coming weeks.

Consultant Contracts

The implementation date for the Public Only Consultants Contracts was March 8th 2023.

Galway University Hospital

- 12 new permanent consultant posts were approved.
- 7 are filled temporarily.
- 5 are vacant despite being advertised to fill temporarily.
- All posts are progressing through NRS/PAS.

Portlincula University Hospital

- 3 posts approved since the new Consultant contract came in, ED, Obs/Gynae and Surgical consultant posts.
- These 3 posts are not filled. 2 are at interview stage (Surgical and Obs/Gynae) and ED has just been approved.

Roscommon University Hospital

- No new posts approved in RUH since the new contract came in last March.

Mayo University Hospital

- New Consultant Obstetrician/Gynaecologist *Recruitment PAS*
- New Consultant Paediatrician post *Recruitment PAS*

- New Integrated Geriatrician 0.5 filled
- New Integrated Respiratory Physician Filled in post
- New Integrated Cardiologist post Filled temp
- New Cardiologist (x2) Permanent post filled March & August 2024
- Replacement Acute Medicine Filled Temp
- New Integrated Endocrinologist Recruitment PAS
- New Inclusion Health Consultant Paediatrics Filled

Sliigo University Hospital

- GIM/Endocrinologist CHO/SUH - **permanent post still vacant, temporary Specified purpose consultant in place since 06/02/2024*
- GIM/Cardiology CHO/SUH - **permanent post still vacant, temporary Specified purpose consultant in place since 11/09/2023*
- Dermatology - *Advertised by PAS*
- Rheumatology - *in queue for advert with PAS*

Letterkenny University Hospital

The following posts have been approved in LUH since the new Consultant Contract was introduced in March 2023:

- *Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist*
- *Consultant Microbiologist*
- *Consultant Cardiologist (x2)*

**The Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist is currently filled on a part time basis with a full time Consultant due to take up post on a locum basis from 1st May 2024. The post has been advertised for permanent filling and we expect interviews to be held shortly by the Public Appointment Service.*

**LUH is awaiting the commencement of a Consultant Microbiologist to take up this newly approved post in Q2 of 2024. It is also expected that this position will be advertised later in 2024. This is a shared post with CHO 1 to provide Consultant Microbiology services to health care services in the community sector.*

Consultant Update LUH February 2024		
Consultant Radiologists – 3 Posts	Applicants	With PAS – Await interview dates
Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist	Applicants	With PAS – Await interview dates
Consultant Physician in Endocrinology	Interviewed	Candidate in clearance with PAS
Consultant Endocrinologist	Applicants	With PAS – Await interview dates
Consultant Endocrinologist with Community Interest x 2 posts	Applicants	With PAS – Await interview dates
Consultant in Emergency Medicine	Interviewed	Start date agreed 25 th March 2024
Consultant Anaesthetist	Interviewed	Start date agreed 8 th April 2024
Consultant Urologist	Applicants	With PAS – Await interview dates

Total amount of staff employed in each hospital:

Staff Category	Census WTE JAN 2024
Management & Administrative	1,842.20
Medical & Dental	1,805.65
Nursing & Midwifery	4,808.29
Health & Social Care Professionals	1,441.54
General Support	1,042.23
Patient & Client Care	1,140.13
Overall Result	12,080.04

Breakdown by Hospital Site is as follows:

Hospital	Census WTE JAN 2024
Galway University Hospital	4,537.81
Sligo University Hospital	2,146.16
Letterkenny University Hospital	2,205.71
Mayo University Hospital	1,514.08
Portiuncula University Hospital	1,081.23
Roscommon University Hospital	479.17
Hospital Group HQ	115.88

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3868	Can we get an updated report on the new community inclusion hubs in Donegal and the services they are providing, and can you confirm if any progress has been made on on going service users transport cost issues?	Cllr C Brogan
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HSE Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo (CH CDLMS) Disability Services operate a number of adult Day Services under the auspices of the Donegal Community Inclusion Training Services (DCITS). DCITS operates eleven Community Inclusion Hubs in County Donegal as across a range of locations including Letterkenny, Dungloe, Carndonagh, Ballybofey and Donegal Town. Community Inclusion Hubs operated by DCITS provide Day Services to adults, including school leavers, with disabilities.

The new DCITS Community Inclusion Hub Dungloe was officially opened on Tuesday, 18th July 2023. This was the official opening of Community Inclusion Hub Dungloe's new permanent premises. This Community Inclusion Hub provides Day Service supports to young adults and school leavers with intellectual disabilities from the North West Donegal area.

Minister Anne Rabbitte officiated at the official opening which was led by the people accessing services at the Community Inclusion Hub Dungloe. The DCITS Media Team, which is operated by the people accessing DCITS services with the support of staff, was there to record the event and share the event across DCITS media platforms.

DCITS throughout its eleven Community Inclusion Hubs deliver person-centred supports and programmes to adults with disabilities in line with the HSE's New Directions policy for adult Day Services. This includes individual and group supports reflective of each person's own identified goals and ambitions as identified in their individual Person-Centred Plan.

Transport Charge

Transport to Day Services throughout Community Healthcare Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo (CH CDLMS) is

currently operated by SITT/Locallink as per its contract with the HSE. The €4 transport charge which is currently in place for those accessing transport to Day Services is a contribution to the travel costs incurred by the operator. The current funding allocation to CH CDLMS to deliver transport to Day Services across the five counties of CH CDLMS does not meet the cost of delivering the required service. CH CDLMS finds itself with no option but to support transport to Day Services in the absence of viable alternatives being provided by the National Transport Authority. In the absence of a transport charge being levied by the operator, there would be significant additional cost incurred by CH CDLMS under the contract with SITT. It should be noted that the Department of Social Protection may provide assistance to people who require support with payments such as transport costs to Day Services.

D Monaghan, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare Organisation, (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo)

W108Q3869	Can I get an update on at what stage in the process is the Primary care centre for An Spidéal at? I was advised in September 2023 that it was expected to progress to stage 3 in October. Has this happened and what is the current timeline to commence development of the centre.	Cllr D Ó Cualáin
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The HSE has recently completed a review of the Operational lease Model approach for the delivery of Primary Care Centre Accommodation at national level. This was driven by concerns about the financial viability of existing priced offers and also the desire to update and strengthen the scheme. It is now intended to reactivate locations such as Spiddal which have not advanced in recent times. The development of updated documentation for the tender process is expected to be fully completed in the coming weeks. It is expected that the HSE will be re-advertising the Spiddal location by end of April of this year. Any proposals received from applicants in due course will need to be evaluated against the HSE requirements for such primary care projects.

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates

W108Q3870	What role does the HSE have in relation to the selection and use of burial grounds? What criteria/guidance must be adhered to in relation to the selection and establishment of new or the extension of established burial grounds?	Cllr D Ó Cualáin
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The main legislation in relation to the provision and management of Burial Grounds are

- Public Health (Ireland) Act 1878)
- Sanitary Services Act 1948
- Local Government Act 1994
- Local Government Act 2001
- Minister for Local Government and Public Health, Rules and Regulations for the Regulation of Burial Grounds 1888 and amendments made to these rules in 1919, 1029 and in 2013.

The Burial ground regulations above place an obligation on the Local authority to ensure that each grave be sunk to the perpendicular depth of eight feet at the least, or in case the nature of the sub-soil will not permit of the grave being sunk to such depth, then to such lesser depth as the medical officer of health of the sanitary authority shall certify in writing to be sufficient for the protection of public health, but in such case not more than one interment shall be permitted in such grave without the written authorisation of the medical officer of health of the sanitary authority.

The HSE has always via the Environmental Health Service been requested to assess if a new site or burial extension meets the requirement that is sufficient to protect public health.

The local authority would normally open a number of trial holes on any new proposed site or extension, so the HSE can assess that it meets the eight feet depth without out any water ingress or material such as rock that would prevent the opening of graves to the required depth.

Consideration must also be given if rock is present to any negative impact it may have on existing graves when trying to open a new grave to meet the legislation. Public health consideration of both existing and new graves are the only concern of the HSE in relation to any site.

Galway County Council Burial Ground Policy document sets out the involvement of the HSE in assessing the suitability of proposed burial grounds to meet its obligation under the above regulation.

Maria Horkan, Principal Environmental Health Officer

W108Q3871	Given the ongoing difficulties in GUH in relation to overcrowding and the high number of patients on trollies and long waits in the ED/MAU/ESU during the summer months, what plans do hospital management have to address this ongoing crisis and what plans are being put in place to cope and deal with the expected winter surge in services? Has additional capacity been identified. What actions will be taken to address these issues in the coming months? Will the recent embargo on staff recruitment announced by the Department of Health impact services this winter?	Cllr D Ó Cualáin
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High numbers of attendances to our ED Department continues and work to address the sustained pressure on UHG is ongoing. This is further compounded by recent COVID outbreaks which have affected our bed capacity with the closure of several wards/blocked beds.

We continue to focus on a number of issues including trying to reduce numbers of patients on trolleys in ED, reduced wait times for bed allocation for the longest waiting patients in ED and a reduction of > 24 hour ED breaches.

In order to achieve these priorities we are focusing on the following:

- The ED Transit Area (EDTA) is utilised for patients >75 who are awaiting admission and the no of cubicle spaces has been increased by 5.
- Two new ED Consultants are in post since January and February. There are now 5.5 ED Consultants.
- Recent Nursing Developments include an Advanced Nurse Practitioner now in post for Paediatric Patients in ED. There are also two Acute Oncology Service Clinical Nurse Specialists in post in ED triaging this cohort of patients.
- Patient flow Safety Flow Huddle Twice daily meeting for bed allocation, focus to ensure >75 patients are transferred to the ward/EDTA. The patient flow team has been augmented to 10 staff of which 9 are in post with 1 vacancy currently.
- Mars (Multidisciplinary Allied Response Team) and FFD (frailty) team are present in ED and ensure early intervention for frailty screening and also admission avoidance.
- Egress- Remained focus on Integrated Length of Stay weekly rounds & >14 days patients assisted discharge/discharge planning, in collaboration with CHO west colleagues.
- Service agreements have been put in place with both the Galway Clinic and the Bon Secours to provide frailty beds to support bed capacity for GUH. There has been an increase in the number of beds provided by the Galway Clinic from 10 to 20 beds since October and there are 17 beds in the Bon Secours.
- The Pathfinder pilot (alternative pathways for older patients who can be treated for non-urgent issues without having to attend ED) commenced in May 2023. This service operates 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday for patients >65 years.
- OPRaH (Older Persons Rehabilitation at Home): Early Supported Discharge to enable selected patients to return home on average 8 days sooner from hospital, there has been an expansion of the current service– Phase 2 of the OPRaH (Older Person Rehabilitation at Home) to enable a wider catchment area.
- Patient Flow and Discharge Co-Ordinators are in place for extended day Monday to Friday and onsite 7/7.
- We continue to work closely with our community colleagues on egress/ integrated discharge rounds to ensure we are utilising every possible avenue. The Integrated Discharge Manager for CHO West links closely with Public and Private nursing homes to help progress the discharge process.

In addition to the above priorities:

- Our Flu Vaccination and COVID Booster programme for staff has been rolled out and is ongoing.
- Recruitment of Medical and Nursing Staff is ongoing, where possible.

Recruitment and retention due to the national embargo for some staff cohorts (clerical grades, support staff, NCHDs) and of clinical staff in key areas e.g. ED, FFD is affecting progress and service delivery. With some posts unfilled/maternity leave, it is difficult to deliver an optimal efficient service, which can lead to delays inpatient experience times. Infrastructural constraints and bed deficits also continue to affect capacity as well as community constraints such as shortage of nursing home and long term care placements within Galway and neighbouring counties.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3872	Has the school immunisations service returned to attending and undertaking immunisations in all schools in Co. Galway? Children from areas in Connemara were previously being asked to attend Galway city for their vaccinations. Does the immunisation team provide a service through Irish to schools and children in Gaeltacht/Irish speaking areas?	Cllr D Ó Cualáin
<p>In 2020 & 2021 all children in Co. Galway were invited to attend Renmore Community Centre for their school vaccinations during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In September 2022, the school immunisation programme returned to the delivery of administering immunisations in the schools. However there are a number of schools that will not grant access to the school and therefore these vaccinations are carried out in the local Primary Care Centre.</p> <p>The immunisation team provides a service through the Irish language to all schools and children in the Gaeltacht area. In addition, the immunisation team have recently completed an Irish language course to further support them to deliver this programme in Irish. All information, consent forms and vaccination passports are available in Irish and are offered to those in Irish speaking schools.</p> <p>J Fitzmaurice, Chief Officer, Community Healthcare West</p>		
W108Q3873	As we see a rise in sudden deaths in reasonably young people in this area have the H S E any plans to hire another Pathologist to Sligo Hospital.	Cllr P Farrell
<p>Sligo University Hospital currently has 3 Consultant Histopathologists, 2 Consultant Haematologists and 2 Consultant Microbiologists. However an increase in pathology workload is predicted over the coming years due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) an increase in cancer diagnoses (including an increase in diagnosis at a younger age) and associated screening programmes 2) the setting up of an Infectious Disease unit - this will cater to patients with HIV/Hepatitis/STD's and other communicable diseases, many of whom will be of a younger age 3) An increase in blood testing due to investment in a Community Chronic Disease Management programme, which will predominantly cater to patients of an older age. 4) Infrastructural Developments: The opening of two new wards and the development of an Off-site Day Surgery Unit will result in increased pathology samples and require additional Infection Prevention and Control input. <p>Further Pathologist recruitment will be explored to support all of the above in the coming years.</p> <p>T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group</p>		
W108Q3874	In relation to Ballina District Hospital where do we stand now in relation to the new extension that is been promised for so many years.	Cllr J O Hara
<p>An updated capital submission has been put forward for a major capital development at Ballina District Hospital. Subject to approval of this submission nationally over the coming weeks it is hoped to obtain approval to appoint a design team for the project and to progress the scheme design in 2024.</p> <p>Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director, HSE Capital & Estates</p>		
W108Q3876	Can the RHFWS provide a report on the number of Suicides in each of the full years 2019 to 2023 in the RHFWS Region (and by County or CHO area if possible) so that members can be aware of exactly how bad the current situation is.	Cllr D Gilroy
<p>In Ireland, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides mortality data including deaths by suicide, not the HSE. The CSO is Ireland's national statistical office and its purpose is to impartially collect, analyse and make available statistics about Ireland's people, society and economy. It is attached to the Department of the Taoiseach. Information is publicly available from the CSO (www.cso.ie) and in their main data dissemination service (https://data.cso.ie/#).</p>		

You can contact the CSO (<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/contactus/>) or their Vital Statistics department directly (<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vsar/vitalstatisticsannualreport2020/contactdetails/>).

Information requested

The information you have requested is not consistently available across the CSO tables, and you may like to contact the CSO with your specific enquiry.

However, the following information extracted from various CSO sources may assist you.

Caveats

Death due to intentional self-harm is classified as an unnatural death and therefore, must be referred to the Coroner for investigation. This investigation can take a protracted length of time to complete for various reasons (such as getting medical reports, health and safety reports, engineer's report, and involvement of the Director of Public Prosecutions etc.) and this delays the registration of such deaths.

Data from the CSO is published in different stages:

- Numbers of deaths are provided firstly based on year of registration – 'provisional'
- They are revised later, by year of occurrence – 'official'
- Finally they are revised later again, to include 'late registrations'.

These numbers are not easily comparable across different years – at any given time, data for different years is at different stages. Therefore the information in each table, may not be like-for-like in another table.

Number of suicide deaths by county, 2019–2022

County	2019*	2020*	2021*	2022**	Total
Clare	14	14	14	16	58
Donegal	12	13	13	5	43
Galway City	8	5	7	5	25
Galway County	13	23	25	16	77
Leitrim	3	2	1	1	7
Limerick City	19	5	5	12	41
Limerick County	16	9	8	15	48
Mayo	12	15	15	9	51
Roscommon	6	8	11	6	31
Sligo	9	13	8	12	42
Tipperary	22	25	25	11	83
Total	134	132	132	108	506

*Figures from <https://data.cso.ie/table/VSD30> CSO table VSD30.

**Figures from <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vsar/vitalstatisticsyearlysummary2022/>

2020 Updated data

On 14th November 2023 the CSO released the Suicide Statistics 2020 along with a new Statistical Table to take account of late registered deaths. This information is available from <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vsar/suicidestatistics2020/>. County level information is not yet available for deaths by suicide.

2023 Available Data

Data relating to deaths having occurred in the first quarter of 2023 is available from <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-vsar/vitalstatisticsfirstquarter2023/>. County level information is not yet available for deaths by suicide.

Mr John Meehan, Assistant National Director / Mental Health Planning, and Head of National Office for Suicide Prevention

W108Q3877	Can the RHFWS provide details of how many patients from each county have been brought by the Search and Rescue service to Galway University Hospital in each of the last three years and how many of these were for Emergency Cardiac incidents.	Cllr D Gilroy
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We are currently awaiting further information pertaining to the number of Emergency Cardiac incidents however we can provide the following figures:

Pre-Hospital Air Missions to UHG			
Service	EAS (Emergency Aeromedical Service) Athlone	IRCG (Irish Coast Guard)	Cork HEMS (Hospital Emergency Medical Services)
2021	97	100	9
2022	87	131	5
2023	65	119	4

Inter Hospital Transfers to UCHG	
2021	31
2022	20
2023	25

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3878	Can the RHFWS provide an update on when the National Cardiac services review will be published and if Sligo University Hospital is likely to get a Catheterization Laboratory or a Catheterization Scanner as a result of this review.	Cllr D Gilroy
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The National Cardiac Services review has not yet been published but we understand it is imminent.

However, we are progressing with a Capital project to develop Cardiology CT suite in the new 42 Bed Development. Initiation approval has been received from National Capital Steering Group and feasibility study is currently underway prior to proceeding to make a full capital submission in late 2023.

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3879	Can the RHFWS provide an updated report on the additional services available due to the appointment of an Advanced Nurse Practitioner to the Chronic Disease Hub at Clarion Road Sligo to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this advanced Nurse Practitioner will deal with the care of Type 2 Diabetes patients only • Will this result in a situation where Insulin Pump therapy is available to Paediatrics with diabetes and adults with Type 2 Diabetes in Sligo? 	Cllr D Gilroy
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The DAFNE programme commenced this year to provide the necessary education for patients, delivered by Senior Dietician and Clinical Nurse Specialist, which is a pre requisite to commencing on insulin pump therapy. However, a nurse dedicated to support the adult pump service is not yet approved in the HSE Service Plan. There is no approved funding for this CNS post at this point in time. As this is an essential component of the service, SUH cannot confirm a timeframe for new patients to commence Insulin Pump Therapy.

A. Cosgrove, COO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3880	What are the escalation protocols for UHL, what trolley numbers dictate escalations, how many times has UHL actioned "full capacity protocols" from Jan 1 st 2019 to December 31 st 2023	Cllr S Morris
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Escalation polices are adopted by hospitals, and by individual departments such as the ED, when responding to an increase in demand or a reduction in capacity to meet that demand. Such policies are adopted to better manage risk associated with variation in demand and/or available resources, to ensure safe care can continue to be delivered.

The internal escalation framework for the Emergency Department at UHL flows from and is compatible with the overall escalation framework for the UL Hospitals Group to better ensure an appropriate hospital-wide and group-wide response to periods of high demand.

Various triggers are set out in the escalation framework, arising from which staff will follow particular actions. Such triggers include the number of patients present in the Emergency Department at any one time; the number of patients waiting to be seen; the number of admitted patients waiting for a bed; the acuity of the patients; the availability of staff and so on.

The latest available data shows that up to the 4th February 2024, presentations to the ED at UHL increased by 23% on last year and emergency admissions by 14%.

This trend is more pronounced still among the over 75s with ED presentations having increased by 32% in the first three weeks of the year and emergency admissions by 28%.

We continue to follow our escalation framework to maximise patient flow and create additional capacity to manage the consistently high levels of activity in the hospital.

Ongoing measures include opening surge capacity across all sites; transferring patients on trolleys to our inpatient wards; additional ward rounds by medical teams to expedite discharges or identify patients suitable for transfer to Ennis, Nenagh and St John’s Hospitals; working closely with our colleagues in HSE Mid West Community Healthcare in order to expedite discharges and regular review of scheduled care.

The level of the escalation is discussed at Hospital Management Team meetings, which convenes daily, seven days a week. The framework is very much a dynamic tool and the level of escalation can change over the course of any given day.

The below table outlines the number of times that the Full Capacity Protocol (FCP) has been activated at University Hospital Limerick for the years requested:

Year	Number of days FCP was used
2019	249
2020	219
2021	260
2022	227
2023	365

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospital Groups

W108Q3881	How many times has necessary full capacity protocols not been carried out and why	ClIr S Morris
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Please see set out in response **W108Q3880** above the number of times over the period in question when the full capacity protocol was activated.

Escalation polices are adopted by hospitals, and by individual departments such as the ED, when responding to an increase in demand or a reduction in capacity to meet that demand. Such policies are adopted to better manage risk associated with variation in demand and/or available resources, to ensure safe care can continue to be delivered.

The internal escalation framework for the Emergency Department at UHL flows from and is compatible with the overall escalation framework for the UL Hospitals Group to better ensure an appropriate hospital-wide and group-wide response to periods of high demand.

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The level of the escalation is discussed at Hospital Management Team meetings, which convenes daily, seven days a week. The framework is very much a dynamic tool and the level of escalation can change over the course of any given day.

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospital Groups

W108Q3882	What is the budget for the UHL group and how does this budget compare to other hospital groups since January 2019 in tabulated form.	Cllr S Morris
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Please see below the net budget allocation for UL Hospitals Group between 2019-2023:

Year	Amount
2019	€370,042,942
2020	€445,596,747
2021	€490,128,822
2022	€501,248,787
2023	€530,909,925

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospital Groups

Please see below the net budget allocation for Saolta University Health Care Group between 2019-2023:

Year	Amount
2019	€875,791,454
2020	€956,213,325
2021	€1,064,707,144
2022	€1,177,185,197
2023	€1,158,582,309

T. Canavan, CEO, Saolta University Health Care Group

W108Q3883	There have been many calls for support from UHL Management to the Minister for health to alleviate the continuous overcrowding of the Emergency Department (understandable given the lack of ED beds for a population of 425,000 people when our bed numbers never reached enough to safely cover a population of 350,000 when reconfiguration was carried out) what calls for support have not been forthcoming from the Minister?	Cllr S Morris
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Additional bed capacity is a key priority for UL Hospitals Group.

We acknowledge the support of the government during the COVID-19 pandemic for the much needed increase in bed capacity. This has seen the delivery of an additional 98 inpatient beds and 10 critical care beds at the UHL site since 2020. This significant investment not only allowed us to respond to the crisis of the pandemic but began to address the shortage of

acute bed capacity in the region that is acknowledged by all parties. We must further plan to add capacity across the acute and community sectors to meet the rise in demand from a growing and rapidly ageing population.

A [Spending Review](#) for the Department of Health and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Sept 2022) identified that the MidWest region is still relatively underserved in terms of its inpatient bed capacity at 221 per 100,000 population. The next Health Services Capacity Review is an opportunity to make the case for an increase in inpatient bed capacity in line with the establishment of health regions and the aspiration to distribute resources more equitably on the basis of population need.

We welcome the very visible progress currently being made by contractors on the next phase of bed development at UHL.

Details of current and planned projects which will help address capacity shortages and improve patient flow in the coming years include:

96-bed block

Work commenced on the first 96-bed ward block at UHL in September 2022. The construction phase will take at least two years to complete. It is currently envisaged that the construction phase will be complete by Q1 2025.

Once handed over by the contractors, the new build will need to be equipped and commissioned and staff trained following the completion of a recruitment campaign. We anticipate that this much-needed additional bed capacity for the Midwest will become operational in mid-2025.

Second 96-bed block

We welcome the commitment by the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly and the HSE to accelerate the delivery of the second 96-bed block at UHL.

This next phase of additional works has commenced with excavation works due to begin in the coming weeks. The construction phase will be completed in two stages and will be carried out directly adjacent to the 96-bed block currently under construction at UHL

Surgical Hub

We are pleased to have recently lodged a planning application with Limerick City and County Council for the proposed surgical hub at Scoil Carmel in Limerick.

Surgical hubs are a key priority for the HSE and UL Hospitals Group in improving access for surgical patients and reducing waiting lists. These plans are aligned with the Programme for Government and key HSE policies including Slàintecare and the National Waiting List Action Plan.

Our planning application 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 operate as a satellite of University Hospital Limerick with key staff moving between the sites.

UL Hospitals Group remains committed to working with all stakeholders across the region to ensure that extra capacity is provided.

Noreen Spillane, COO, UL Hospitals Group

W108Q3884	Can I get a comprehensive report on the services provided at Ennistymon Community Hospital and plans for future development. With particular attention to how many beds are available for long term, respite and palliative care. What is the occupancy rate and is there any staffing issues effecting what the hospital can provide.	Cllr L Grant
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The current bed capacity in Ennistymon CNU is 27 beds:

- 17 long stay beds
- 1 palliative care bed
- 9 respite beds

The long stay beds have been operating at full capacity. There is a high level of demand for long-stay beds in the area and there is a waiting list for access to these beds. Demand for respite service has been affected by the pandemic, as many older people have been reluctant to leave their homes and access respite in a community setting. In spite of this, respite services in Ennistymon CNU were offered during the pandemic in line with public health guidelines and have continued to be offered since then. The average occupancy of the unit over the last 12 months is 90% for the 27 beds.

Recruitment and retention of staff remains an issue at Ennistymon CNU, as has been the case for many smaller units in rural areas. Staff shortages have led to the cessation of respite services on two particular occasions in recent times, August 2022 to January 2023 and August 2023 to January 2024. The palliative care bed and five respite beds are currently available for admission.

In order to meet the demand for long stay care needs of the local population, we have carried out refurbishment of one room to repurpose 4 respite beds to 2 long-stay beds. This will reduce the number of respite beds from 9 to 5 and increase the number of long-stay beds to 19. Whilst in the short term this will reduce the overall bed capacity to 25 beds, it will ensure a targeted response to local population demand.

In addition, an application has been submitted to HIQA to register 6 new beds. An announced inspection took place by HIQA on 7th February 2024. Some additional refurbishment is required to meet the standards in order to secure registration. These beds cannot be occupied until they are successfully registered with HIQA. A business case has been submitted nationally to secure an additional staffing requirement of 6.5 WTE to safely open the new beds. On receipt of the HIQA registration, the addition of these 6 beds to the bed stock will increase the capacity of the unit to a total of 31 beds:

- 25 long stay
- 1 palliative care
- 5 respite

****It is important to note that the opening of the new 6 bedded extension is dependent on recruitment of additional staff to ensure the safe care of all residents. We are currently awaiting national approval to recruit these staff members (6.5WTE).*

Maria Bridgeman, Chief Officer, HSE Mid West Community Healthcare