

CC/MQ/MC

Email: pgmidwestacute@hse.ie

20th February 2024

Mr Maurice Quinlivan TD
Dàil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

PQ 3951/24

To ask the Minister for Health when will the surgical hub planned for Limerick and the MidWest become operational; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Maurice Quinlivan

Dear Deputy Quinlivan

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Surgical hubs are a key priority for the HSE and UL Hospitals Group in improving access for surgical patients and reducing waiting lists. These plans are aligned with the Programme for Government and key HSE policies including Sláintecare 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. We are currently reviewing the specific services which will be provided at the new Surgical Hub.

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

This proposed development is an essential part of our strategy to improve access and reduce wait times for our surgical patients, resulting in fewer patients having their surgeries postponed.

A planning application was submitted to Limerick City and County Council in late 2023. A further information request has been issued by the planning authority in respect of the planning permission application for the site. There have also been a number of observations received by the planning authority in respect of the proposal. Additional information will be submitted in due course to the planning authority following consideration of the



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matters raised. Upon approval of planning permission, the timeline for the hub to become operational will be agreed.

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

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Sonya Cotter
Acting Chief Executive Officer
UL Hospitals Group

