

CC/CC/MC

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23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024

Mr Cathal Crowe TD  
Dàil Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

**PQ 23701/24**

**To ask the Minister for Health if he will ensure that an immediate recruitment process will be put in place in spite of the HSE recruitment freeze, to fill an essential post in Ennis General Hospital (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**Details supplied: The rheumatology clinic in Ennis General has three consultants seeing around 100 patients per week. The medical secretary assisting this clinic has resigned so for the past four weeks they've been forced to cancel the clinics - around 400 patients. Until they have a replacement in situ for the clinics, this will continue.**

Dear Deputy Crowe,

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.

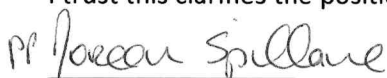
Improved facilities and increased staffing at Ennis Outpatients Department (OPD) on the Kilrush Road have enhanced access to multiple specialist clinics for patients in Clare and across the Midwest region.

Outpatient activity in Ennis grew from 30,575 attendances in 2022 to 34,930 attendances last year.

Supported by an increase in consultants appointed to the UL Hospitals Group who work across multiple sites, rheumatology is among the specialties which has seen an increase in activity at Ennis in recent years.

We can confirm that a deficit in administration staff has regrettably resulted in the temporary cessation of the rheumatology clinic at Ennis. This post is in the process of being filled and we expect the rheumatology clinic in Ennis will resume in early June. We regret any inconvenience caused to our patients.

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



**Ms Colette Cowan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**



Working together, caring for you

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**UL Hospitals Group**



University Hospital Limerick is a member of **UL Hospitals Group** which also comprises; Nenagh Hospital, Ennis Hospital, Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, University Maternity Hospital Limerick and St. John's Hospital (voluntary).