

Cork University Hospitals Group  
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Date: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024

PQ – 35349/24

Deputy Sean Sherlock  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the diminution of haematology and other blood related laboratory services at Mallow General Hospital to the point where surgical procedures are being cancelled; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Sean Sherlock

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Laboratory department at Mallow General Hospital (MGH) has recently encountered a significant staffing resource deficit which has necessitated a change to service provision. (1 x WTE on maternity leave until June 2025, 1 x WTE resigned on 09/08/2024, 1 x WTE on sick leave since 01/08/2024 and is expected to be out of work for 3- 4 months)

Due to the above, the staffing complement in the laboratory is reduced to 1.5 WTE Medical Scientists and 1 MLA.

The reduction in staffing has meant that existing level of service cannot be maintained and contingency arrangements have been put in place.

The Laboratory is open on-site Monday-Friday 09.00-17.00hrs for blood sciences. All blood science services outside of these hours is provided by Cork University Hospital.

To ensure patient safety and compliance with regulatory requirements there is no blood transfusion service at present.

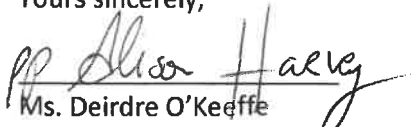
This has resulted in a limited number of elective daycase planned surgical procedures being rescheduled and the transfer of any inpatient requiring blood transfusion to an alternative hospital. No further inter-abdominal surgical cases (lap chole) are scheduled at this point.

A contingency arrangement for the provision of a blood transfusion service delivered via Cork University Hospital and IBTS Irish Blood Transfusion Board is being progressed. The contingency arrangement will enable the recommencement of all elective daycase planned surgical procedures being undertaken at the hospital.

The contingency arrangement for the provision of a blood transfusion service cannot commence until all regulatory requirements are met / in place to the satisfaction of the accreditation board INAB.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ms. Deirdre O'Keefe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ms. Deirdre O'Keefe  
Acting Interim Chief Executive Officer