



Cúram Sláinte
Phobail, Iarthar
ag freastal ar Ghailimh,
Maighéo agus Ros Comáin

Community
Healthcare West
serving Galway, Mayo
and Roscommon

Ceannasáí um Chúram Sláinte

An Sean Ionad Sláinte, Sráid an Bhiocáire, Tuaim, Co. na Gaillimhe

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Pearse Doherty T.D.,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

19th December 2019.

PQ 51096/19

‘To ask the Minister for Health if a service provider (Irish Wheelchair Association announced closure of the Cuisle Centre, Donamon, Co. Roscommon citing upgrades costs as an influencing factor in the decision) sought additional funding for the continuance of a service; if his attention has been drawn to the effect its closure will have on respite service users; and if he will make a statement on the matter’.

Dear Deputy Doherty,

I refer to PQ 51096/19 uploaded on the PAD System on 4th December 2019 and due for response on 24th December 2019 regarding representations that you have made to the Minister for Health concerning ‘if a service provider (Irish Wheelchair Association announced closure of the Cuisle Centre, Donamon, Co. Roscommon citing upgrades costs as an influencing factor in the decision) sought additional funding for the continuance of a service; if his attention has been drawn to the effect its closure will have on respite service users; and if he will make a statement on the matter’. The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you on this matter. The following response outlines the position.

The Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) provides valuable supports and services including respite services on behalf of the HSE for people with disabilities. The HSE is aware of plans on the part of the IWA to improve standards and create choice in terms of access to ‘away holiday breaks’ or ‘respite options’ to enable people with physical disabilities to take a holiday with the specialist support of Irish Wheelchair Association’s staff. Furthermore there has been a shift in best practice approaches, moving away from congregated, health service settings to integrated holiday services that provide people with greater options, alongside the supports they need to maintain independence. This shift is reflected in current HSE policy under ‘Time to Move on from Congregated Settings: A Strategy for Community Inclusion’ and Sláintecare, and it aims to facilitate people with disabilities to live ordinary lives in ordinary places. In line with this HSE policy, the IWA has decided to transition their current holiday/respite model located at Cuisle, Donamon in order to provide a wider range of choice to people with disabilities seeking accessible respite/ holiday breaks-away experiences as part of its reform programme. The move to the new holiday service means that the Cuisle buildings will not open in 2020.

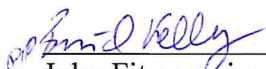
The IWA does not own the existing facility at Cuisle and the lease arrangement in place will expire in 2026. It is also the case that the existing Cuisle facility requires very significant new capital investment in order to undertake major upgrade works. The IWA have indicated to the HSE that this level of capital funding is not available within their current resources. From a value for money perspective, this does not ultimately make sense (capital investment in the Cuisle building) given the facility is no longer fit for purpose and ultimately does not reflect the choice

and preference of people with disabilities who want to have access to holiday respite via standard hotel settings with the necessary support. The HSE have confirmed to the IWA that this level of capital investment is not available to the HSE in the context of priorities set against its capital plan.

From a HSE perspective it is of critical importance that supports are provided to a high standard and are accessible in terms of meeting the needs of people with disabilities. The HSE is assured of service continuity provided by the IWA as part of its planned and funded provision. In addition it should be noted that HSE Community Healthcare West can only provide funding and supports for services within its allocated resources and budget. It is also important to note that the current HSE Capital Plan 2016 – 2021 does not include the refurbishment and upgrading of the site at Cuisle.

I trust that this response has clarified the matter that you have raised in this instance.

Yours sincerely,



John Fitzmaurice,
General Manager,
Community Healthcare West.