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18th December, 2019

Michael McGrath, TD
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 53535/19

"To ask the Minister for Health the status of plans for the development of a primary care centre at a location (details supplied) in County Cork; the steps in the process; when the primary care centre will be developed; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Details Supplied: Douglas, Co Cork

Dear Deputy McGrath,

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.

As outlined in a number of policy documents (most recently the Sláinte Care Implementation Strategy) it is Government policy to transfer activity currently taking place in the acute setting to a more appropriate setting in Primary Care. The development of a primary care centre infrastructure to support such a transfer of activity is essential. The HSE's commitment to the development of Primary Care Centres across the country is outlined in its Capital Development Plan. These centres aim to be a one stop shop providing a range of primary care team services such as GP's, Community Nursing, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech Therapists, Dieticians, Counsellors and in some cases dental and mental health services. They are primarily developed as public private partnership builds or as long term operational leases. All applications to progress any of these arrangements require the approval of the HSE's national property committee. The application process for such approval requires Cork Kerry Community Healthcare to identify the need for the development of such a facility in line with population health needs and the areas proximity to existing or planned primary care centres.

You will be aware that a Primary Care Centre has existed in Blackrock Hall, Cork for a number of years and that a new Primary Care Centre opened in Carrigaline in 2018. Work is underway with developers regarding the progression of a Primary Care Centre in Togher.

In 2019 HSE Estates issued a notification inviting expressions of interest (Stage 1) to build a Primary Care Centre in the Douglas area. Submissions were received, assessed and suitable submissions have now been shortlisted. HSE Estates is currently communicating with the applicants and once concluded HSE Estates will be engaging with successful applicants and inviting them to submit detailed bids which will lead to one preferred bidder being identified to deliver the Douglas Primary Care Centre.

The stages involved in the development of a Primary Care Centre from inception to opening are as follows:

1. Expressions of interest sought
2. Applications assessed
3. Application to HSE Property Committee to approve
4. Letter of intent to proceed issued
5. Planning permission sought
6. Legal agreements finalised
7. Consultation with staff re layout
8. Build commences
9. Handover to HSE
10. Commissioning i.e. equipping, services, IT etc.
11. Phased opening

The development of all primary care centres is subject to GP commitment and completion of the build to HSE specification.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Teresa O' Donovan
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare