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4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Mr. Michael Healy-Rae, T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 48392/19**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the steps he will take regarding the situation in Milltown, County Kerry in which there is no general practitioner service; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.**

**Detail Supplied: Minister a number of concerned constituents have contacted me in relation to the no GP service in Milltown Co Kerry. This is a vital service that is needed for any town or village. I believe Doctor O'Leary has resigned from the GMSC scheme in Sept 2019. More needs to be done to find a replacement as a matter of urgency before the 13th Dec 2019. After this date patients have been told they must find an alternative doctor.**

Dear Deputy Healy-Rae,

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare does not directly employ GPs, we have contracts with GP practices to provide services to medical card holders (what are referred to as General Medical Services lists or panels).

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare has supported the GP practice in Milltown for the last 12 months, following the decision by the GP there to end her practice. Once the GP in Milltown indicated her intention to end her practice, we advertised this panel on a number of occasions and since then have made extensive and repeated efforts to find a GP to take on the GMS panel patients. Unfortunately, no GP has come forward to take on the contract. The list has 380 patients and the financial viability of taking on a list of this size is a challenge.


Since November 2018, CKCH has funded a locum GP in the practice in Milltown, and since September 30th of this year, CKCH has supported the practice funding both the GP and the necessary support staff, so that so that eligible medical card holders continue to receive the care to which they are entitled.

Given the on-going difficulties in finding a GP willing to take on the GMS patients, we took the difficult decision to disperse the panel of patients to other GPs in the area, and told patients in mid November that the practice would close in December.

In light of the understandable concerns expressed by the community, and in order to allow for time for more detailed consultation with the community and public representatives we have decided to postpone the date of the planned closure.

A meeting was held between HSE Primary Care Management, local community and public representatives on 18th November 2019 to listen to concerns raised, and discuss measures to attract a GP to the GMS contract in Milltown. The postponement of the date will provide time to the local community to scope these measures further. The HSE remain in regular contact with the community and representatives while this is happening. Correspondence issued to patients on November 21<sup>st</sup> from CKCH to keep them informed of developments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Majella Daly". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Majella Daly**  
**A/Head of Service - Primary Care,**  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**