



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

17 June 2020

Deputy Denis Naughten TD  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

Rannan na nOspideil Ghearmhíochaine  
Aonad 4A – Áras Dargan  
An Ceantar Theas  
An Bothar Mileata  
Cill Mhaighneann  
BÁC 8

Acute Operations  
Health Service Executive  
Unit 4A - The Dargan Building  
Heuston South Quarter  
Military Road  
Kilmainham  
Dublin 8.

**PQ 8407/20\*** *To ask the Minister for Health the number of beds and locations available for hospital step-down patients that are positive for Covid-19; the number occupied in each location; his plans and timeline for additional capacity; the corresponding figures for those that need to self-isolate from the community as a result of a positive Covid-19 test; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Naughten,

I wish to advise you that Acute Operations 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.

In general, patients in acute hospitals whom require step down services access such services in community nursing units and provide nursing homes. Patients access these services through a range of funding mechanisms including convalescence or transitional care (short stay) or the Nursing Home Support Scheme (Fair Deal – long stay).

Open beds are available to all patients, however, in relation to COVID-19, the latest guidance from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/residentialcarefacilities/> requires all patients being transferred from the acute to such facilities to be tested for COVID-19 in advance, be isolated on admission and remain so for 14 days with the last 5 days being fever free.

The majority of such beds are operated by the private sector and as such, the HSE does not have access to or monitor occupancy levels or the numbers in isolation. The latest information available to us on the locations of such facilities can be searched by county through the following link: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/residentialcare/>

The HSE understands that the Minister has commissioned an Expert Advisory Group to examine the future of this sector and we anticipate the subsequent recommendations may inform future policy and investment decisions.

Yours sincerely,

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**Carol Ivory**  
General Manager, Acute Operations