



Head of Service for Older People  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**  
Health Service Executive  
Model Business Park  
Model Farm Road  
Cork Eircode: T12 HT02

Oifig Cúraim Shóisialta  
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Corcaigh Ciarraí  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Páirc Gnó Model  
Bóthar na Modh Feirme  
Corcaigh Eircode: T12 HT02  
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27<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Minister Brendan Griffin T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ 7099/20:**

**“To ask the Minister for Health his views on a matter (details supplied) regarding a hospital”**

**Details Supplied: Kenmare Community Hospital. It has been brought to my attention by family members of residents at the hospital that patients who have tested positive for Covid19 at University Hospital Kerry are now being transferred to the upstairs floor of this hospital. Is this true? There is a huge fear that the elderly patients downstairs could contract the virus from staff moving from upstairs to downstairs.**

Dear Minister Griffin,

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 wish to advise where patients are transferred into our residential settings every possible recommended precaution is taken. Those precautions apply whether someone is being admitted from an acute hospital or from the community. National guidelines on admissions to residential facilities have been issued by the HPSC (Health Protection Surveillance Centre) and we work in accordance with the guidelines at all times. In any case where someone has been admitted to any of our residential settings including community hospitals, this has been done with the advice and guidance of Public Health consultants. We also work on an on-going basis with experts in Infection Prevention and Control. All of our residential centres are following the most up-to-date guidelines on the use of personal protective equipment (i.e. masks, gowns, gloves and goggles).

Within the Kenmare Community Nursing Unit “The Roughty” i.e. upstairs unit has been identified as a suitable step down facility for recovering Covid patients. The Unit is fully set up to nurse and care for these patients in spacious single en-suite rooms. I can confirm that strict procedures are in place to ensure that there is absolutely no cross-over between staff in both locations and all communication with the staff in the downstairs unit and management is done by phone.

The care delivered to all our residents remains at a high standard, and is consistent with all best practice guidelines, including the relevant HPSC guidelines mentioned above. The health and well-being of our residents is always our priority, and all appropriate measures are in place to protect both residents and our staff.



Finally, we are encouraged by the fact that a number of residents who received step-down care in a community setting have made good recoveries and have been able to return home.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabrielle O'Keeffe', written in a cursive style.

**Gabrielle O'Keeffe**  
**Head of Services for Older People,**  
**Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**

