



**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  
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17<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Deputy Peadar Tóibín T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ Ref 5230/21**

**“To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to reports of a breach of Covid-19 guidelines and restrictions at a residential care facility (details supplied) in County Cork, which has allegedly resulted in a cluster of cases arising from the event; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.**

**Details supplied: <https://www.southernstar.ie/news/hse-to-probe-claim-of-hospital-breaching-visiting-policies-4217045>**

Dear Deputy Tóibín,

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.

The safety and wellbeing of all our residents and staff is everyone’s utmost priority. While we do not comment on people’s individual details or circumstances in order to protect their privacy, I can confirm that we have carried out a preliminary assessment into the circumstances you have raised with us and this has been reviewed by a Serious Incident Management Team.

Although significant precautions were taken and there was extensive advance preparation ahead of the visit, the assessment found that the visit wasn’t fully in line with visiting guidelines. Although the actual visit took place in an outdoor space in accordance with the provisions of the outdoor visiting policy, the visitors accessed this space through a reception area which constituted a breach of the guidance. They did not enter the residential area.

Notwithstanding that the engagement with the resident took place in accordance with the guidelines in an outdoor space, the resident was subsequently cared for in isolation for two weeks as a precaution. I can also confirm that no resident of Clonakilty Community Hospital has tested positive for Covid-19 in the last number of months.



Cork Kerry Community Healthcare management has reiterated the importance of strict adherence to the guidelines and current restrictions on visiting with all our long-term residential care facilities, including the difference between outdoor and indoor visiting, and what are critical and compassionate circumstances.

It is important to remember that all our community hospitals have, where possible, facilitated visits on compassionate grounds. This is in line with the guidelines on visiting, which makes specific reference to critical and compassionate visits, once a risk assessment is carried out.

The guidelines also allow for outdoor visiting and window visiting where appropriate. This is in recognition of the importance of contact with families and loved ones for residents.

I trust this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,



**Gabrielle O'Keeffe**  
**Head of Service for Older People**

