

2nd February 2021

Pádraig O'Sullivan, TD
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 2816/21

"To ask the Minister for Health the level of services to be provided at SouthDoc Blackpool under the proposed reopening of 18 January 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy O'Sullivan,

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.

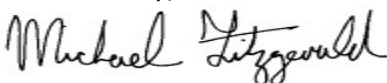
We were advised by SouthDoc that following consideration of their position in relation to delivering services in the context of Covid activity that the Blackpool centre would reopen by appointment from January 18th 2021. This followed significant engagement between Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and SouthDoc.

We were informed on the afternoon of January 15th 2021 that SouthDoc had changed its position and had decided not to resume this level of service at this time in the context of the sharp increase in Covid numbers. We are concerned at SouthDoc's lack of consultation with the HSE on this decision. We wrote to the Board of SouthDoc seeking further information as to what led to this decision and we sought assurance from SouthDoc that their position would be reviewed in the context of the extraordinary pressure that all health services are under at this time. We also sought to meet with the Board of SouthDoc to discuss these issues as a matter of urgency. We received a response from the Board of SouthDoc today and the contents of that response are currently under consideration.

The HSE is committed to ensure that appropriate out-of-hours GP services are available to medical card holders in the area.

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

Yours sincerely,



Michael Fitzgerald
Chief Officer
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare