



Cúram Sláinte
Phobail, Iarthar
ag freastal ar Ghailímh,
Maigheo agus Ros Comáin

Community
Healthcare West
serving Galway, Mayo
and Roscommon

Ceannasaí na Seirbhísí Bunchúraim

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10th May 2021

Deputy Brid Smith, TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Ref: PQ's 22738/21 & 22739/21

Ref: To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE has offered care staff in east County Galway single occupancy rooms with no cooking facilities as an alternative to their current accommodation; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE has undertaken a review of the HSE staff temporary accommodation scheme which was used to accommodate front-line workers such as those in direct provision who had been housed in unsuitable accommodation; if care staff in east County Galway have been advised that they must move from their current accommodation at the end of April 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question's. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

HSE Community Healthcare West wishes to state that a total of 14 staff have been availing of the HSE staff accommodation scheme at the Connacht Hotel Galway. The majority of the staff have been accommodated since early last year with a total of 10 people availing of the scheme in excess of 9 months. The majority of staff have also been availing of HSE funded transport to and from work on a daily basis.

In recent months there has been a dramatic decline in the demand for the HSE accommodation scheme which is associated with the reduction of COVID-19 outbreaks in healthcare residential settings and the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccination scheme for all healthcare workers. Whilst no decision has been made on the cessation of the scheme, it is a temporary accommodation scheme. In this context, it was considered appropriate to contact individually the group of staff availing of the scheme at the Connacht Hotel, to advise them that the temporary accommodation scheme will end at some point. This was deemed necessary to ensure that staff have time to consider and plan alternative options and that they are not placed in a crisis situation when the HSE temporary accommodation scheme ends.

Due to the temporary nature of the scheme the accommodation available varies depending on Hotel capacity/activity. Recently, due to unavailability of the apartments at the Connaught Hotel it was necessary to relocate staff on a temporary basis within the hotel, to ensuite bedrooms. This was until such time as alternative self-catering accommodation could be sourced. During this time staff were supported by their employer and offered

support from migrant support services. Self-catering accommodation at Goldcrest apartments, NUIG Galway has been secured and staff are currently being contacted and supported regarding the move to this accommodation.

The HSE is committed to supporting these workers within the scope of the scheme.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

pp. Niall Beatty

Mary Warde

Head of Primary Care

Community Healthcare West