



Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas
Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar 1
(An Cabhán, Dún na nGall, Liatroim, Muineachán & Sligeach)
Áras Isacc Butt, Bealach Féich, Tír Chonaill F93 YV9R
Head of Service Disability
HSE Area 1 (Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan & Sligo)
The Isacc Butt Building , Ballybofey
Co. Donegal F93 YV9R
Tel+353(0)74 9189028 or (0)74 9189032
Email: Edel.Quinn@hse.ie

30th November 2021

Deputy Joe McHugh
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ ref 57648/21

“To ask the Minister for Health if he will ensure that day services are protected for users in facilities and receive great care such as Cashel na Cor in Buncrana, County Donegal in order to ensure that both the user and families/carers have security in advance in order to pre-plan and prepare; and if he will make a statement on the matter”

Dear Deputy McHugh

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 have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Due to a COVID-19 outbreak in one of the HSE residential disability centres in Inishowen, it was necessary to redeploy staff from day services for a time to continue to provide care to the people with disabilities who are resident in the centre. The COVID-19 outbreak had to be managed in line with Infection Control and Public Health guidelines to ensure adequate care and safety for residents and staff. A significant number of staff in the residential service were affected by COVID during the outbreak and were unable to attend work. All efforts were made by HSE HR and the Disability Service to recruit replacement staff to cover the residential service from existing HSE panels and from recruitment agencies. However the available staff resources from panels and agencies were not adequate to provide staffing to the residential service. Workforce availability is a challenge with Inishowen being particularly difficult to recruit to. Disability Services also sought to redeploy staff from other areas but staffing levels are reduced across the system due to COVID-19 leave and insufficient staff could not be secured. Consequently, day services staff had to be redeployed to the residential service which operates on a 24/7, 365 day basis.

From Monday, 22nd November, the day services at Cashel na Cor, Buncrana for Priority 1 day service users have resumed to pre-COVID-19 outbreak levels and people who use the service and their families have been notified of this. The day service will be increasing on a phased basis in line with the management of the outbreak as residential service staff are deemed fit and safe to return to work. The Disability Service aims to restore full day service delivery as soon as possible. Full day service operation is a priority for Donegal Disability Services and it is only as a last resort that Day Service provision is reduced and all decisions are made in line with infection prevention control and public health guidelines and requirements for safe service delivery.

Additional home support packages on a case-by-case basis have been made available to families that were unable to avail of day services during the outbreak.

I trust that this is of assistance but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely



Edel Quinn
Head of Service Disability CHO1
Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas
Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar 1