



CÚRAM SLÁINTE POBAIL
CORCAIGH CIARRAI
CORK KERRY
COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

Oifig na Seirbhísí Sláinte Meabhrach | Cúram Sláinte Pobail Corcaigh & Ciarraí

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
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10th December 2021

Deputy Pat Buckley,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 59130/21

“To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that some residents of the Owenacurra Mental Health Centre, Midleton, County Cork have been offered alternative placement outside of Midleton which are not appropriate to their needs; the reason this is happening when the residents want to remain in Midleton; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Buckley,

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.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare wish to emphasise that safety is central to the provision of a quality mental health service. The original plan for the Owenacurra Centre was to refurbish the building so as to bring it to a standard that allows for the provision of care and recovery which a modern service should provide and one that matches the care being provided there. However, as we moved to the advanced planning phase for the centre, serious concerns emerged that any level of refurbishment would not bring the building up to the standards required and neither would it be regarded as fit for purpose. The HSE recognizes the interdependencies of risks, e.g. the relative safety of the service user and staff is dependent on the safety of the environment in which care is delivered. Advice from building experts and our HSE estates function, informed the HSE in its difficult decision to close the centre, given the unacceptable deficiencies in the existing accommodation and the investment of significant funding into a building which would still not bring the unit up to an acceptable accommodation standard for residents.

The priority of Mental Health Services Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) is to ensure that we identify the most suitable placement for every resident of the Owenacurra Centre based on their assessed needs, will and preferences. The process of finding the most appropriate alternative placements for the residents is currently underway and is likely to continue for several more months, so as to achieve our aim of finding the most appropriate placements possible and minimise disruption for each of our residents. This process involves all key persons including the resident, him/herself, their families and the multi-disciplinary clinical team, in order to ensure that the transfer of each individual resident is to the most appropriate setting for each individual. Meetings with family members and residents continue and families will be advised as placement opportunities arise.



With regards to your specific query as to the number of residents who have been offered alternative placement outside of Midleton which are not appropriate to their needs, I wish to highlight that all of the residents have had their needs assessed. In addition to the needs of the individual resident and their own personal will and preference with regards to alternative placement, management have consideration of a number of factors including suitability of the new environments, preference regarding sharing of accommodation, transport issues, etc. Without in any way identifying individuals or their preferences, it is clear that some people will require ongoing continuing care while others can be facilitated to live in lower support settings and with a plan for ongoing rehabilitative support and potentially a form of semi-independent living. As each placement is specific to the assessed needs and preferences of each of the 18 residents, all feasible options with regards to alternative placements are being explored. Furthermore as detailed above, consideration is being given to alternative placements appropriate to the needs of each individual residents, with that in mind no resident has been offered a placement that is not appropriate to their needs. As outlined in Press Briefings, the HSE are committed to a property search in the Midleton Area to seek a 4 bed housing option if applicable to the individual needs and preferences.

I trust you find the above clarifies the query raised.

Yours sincerely,



Kevin Morrison,
A/Head of Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare