

19th December 2022

Deputy Neasa Hourigan,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 61305/22

“To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the closure of a centre (details supplied) in Midleton, County Cork; if he will provide an update on the ongoing supports being provided to the remaining residents and their families in the process of being transferred; and if he will make a statement on the matter..”

Details supplied: the Owenacurra Centre

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for a response.

The original plan for the Owenacurra Centre Approved 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, once planning work for this refurbishment began, and based on commissioned reports, it was established that refurbishment would effectively mean demolishing the building, as a full refurbishment in itself would not guarantee that the building would meet building requirements or be regarded as fit for purpose.

In June 2021, the difficult but necessary decision to close the unit was made in consultation with our HSE Estates colleagues given the unacceptable deficiencies in the 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.

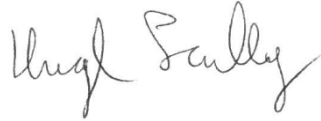
As you may be aware, 14 residents have already moved from the Owenacurra Centre. Their new homes include nursing homes and community residences, and these new placements fit each person’s individual assessed needs. Our staff have followed up with the former residents, they continue to receive support according to their assessed need in a more appropriate environment. I know that this move has been a cause of uncertainty for many of our residents, and the HSE regrets this. There has been ongoing communication both informal and formal from care staff and management including meetings with family members and residents and visits to new potential homes.

We understand that moving to a new home can be a stressful and difficult process, and the team at Owenacurra are here to support the remaining residents including the clinicians and the independent advocacy worker on the unit

The assessed needs and will and preference of residents has always been to the fore in the context of their relocation to other appropriate settings. The HSE has been very conscious of the need for engagement with residents during this difficult period and has extended the closure period of the centre while the services & residential requirements of residents are being identified and sourced.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh Scully', written in a cursive style.

Mr. Hugh Scully
A/General Manager
Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare