



15<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Mr. Mattie McGrath TD  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 62006/22**

**To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 176 on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022, to outline the staff vacancy rates for the two Respite Service Providers in South Tipperary; the number of staff vacancies; the stage of the recruitment process; what incentives have been offered to increase attractiveness of the role for future employees; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy McGrath,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

*I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.*

The two overnight respite service providers in South Tipperary are the Brothers of Charity a Section 38 service provider and Northfields RK Respite, which is a private provider. Both services have received additional funding in 2022 to increase capacity in service provision of overnight respite.

During 2022, the Brothers of Charity supported additional openings for 1 child and 2 adults with the additional funding provided. However full capacity has not been reached as the Brothers of Charity currently have five vacant posts between children and adult respite services. It is understood that these positions are in the HR Recruitment process, it should be noted that the Health Care Assistant posts have been advertised on a number of occasions.

#### **Recruitment Initiatives:**

The Brothers of Charity hosted an Open Night recently and as a result four relief staff are currently being processed by their HR Department. With the successful commencement of these posts the Brothers of Charity should be in a position to open one extra night per fortnight for both children and adult respite services. The Brothers of Charity also report that they have secured a Staff Nurse who is currently covering an existing sick leave hence it has not increased numbers. It is hoped the staff member will return in early 2023.

Northfields RK Respite were able to provide one additional night per week respite to two children with the increase in 2022 funding.

RK Respite currently has the full staffing complement to offer the following services.

- 38 Weekend Openings
- 38 Saturday Day Time Places
- 40 Day Support Openings delivered over school holidays ( 2 February Mid-Term, 6 Easter Holiday, 27 Summer Holiday, 2 Halloween, 3 Christmas Holidays)
- Two night opening for the 9 weeks of Summer Holidays



- 34 One Night Mid-Week Individualised Openings during school term
- 6 One Day One Night Individualised Openings during school holidays
- 17 Mid-Week Term Time Openings
- 17 Mid-Week Term Time Openings (Higher Support)

Northfields RK have advised they will not be in a position to expand on same.

Both service providers have responded with flexibility, where possible, to support emergency respite requests throughout the year.

Brothers of Charity is Section 38 Service Provider funded under Service Arrangement and is responsible for their own governance, financial and HR management.

Northfields RK Respite Private for Profit Provider are funded under a Service Arrangement and are responsible for their own governance, financial and HR management.

Both providers are bound by their individual Service Arrangement and regular review by the HSE.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Karen Fitzgerald'.

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**Ms. Karen Fitzgerald**  
**A/Head of Service, Disability Service**  
**South East Community Healthcare**