

4th March 2022

Deputy Pauline Tully,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 10358/22

“To ask the Minister for Health the reason a respite centre (details supplied) in Listowel has been closed; the timeframe for when this service will be reopened; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Details supplied: Abhaile Respite Centre

Dear Deputy Tully,

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

St John of Gods Services provide both Children and Adult Respite Services in one of their Respite Houses at Abhaile, Listowel, Co. Kerry. There are four adults who attend St John of Gods Day Services in Ashfield Listowel, Co. Kerry from Monday to Friday. Children avail of overnight respite at Abhaile Monday to Friday as well as alternate weekends. A long-standing arrangement is in place where the four adults receive overnight respite every second weekend.

In response to an emergency situation regarding a child a decision was made by HSE Disability Services Kerry in collaboration with relevant stakeholders for this child to go into Abhaile respite house for a two week period initially, as it was familiar to him, would enable him to continue to go to school with minimum disruption to him. There are no emergency childrens' respite placements available in both Cork and Kerry.

As a result of this decision, it was necessary to temporarily suspend both children and adult overnight respite services at Abhaile, Listowel. Families were contacted and additional home support was offered to Priority 1 and 2 families for children as well as the four adults. Some families took up the offer of additional home supports, while other families declined the offer.

HSE Disability Services Kerry are actively working with all professionals involved with this child, including SJOG services, TUSLA, the School Principal and the North Kerry Childrens' Disability Network Team to identify an appropriate solution to this situation for the child, as a matter of urgency, as he cannot return home in the short term. Relevant assessments for a residential placement for this child in the immediate to medium term are currently being undertaken by appropriate agencies who provide residential services for children with such a

profile. These assessments are due to be completed in early March 2022 and proposals provided to HSE Disability Services. The HSE will then review the proposals and arrange for this young boy to move from Abhaile to a more suitable residential placement as soon as possible. This will then support the re-opening of both children and adult respite services at Abhaile, Listowel.

HSE Disability Services Kerry are very aware of the impact the temporary suspension of overnight respite services for those children and adults that avail of this very valuable service and are confident that there will be a successful conclusion to the current emergency situation for this young boy. HSE Disability Services Kerry will continue to engage with SJOG and arrange for the provision of additional Home Supports to the Priority 1 & 2 families affected and expect a resolution shortly to this suspension of respite services at Abhaile.

I trust this clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely



**Ms. Majella Daly,
Head of Disability Services,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**

