

9th March, 2022

Mr Pa Daly, TD.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 12701/22

“To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that respite services in a centre (details supplied) have been repeatedly cancelled since the start of January 2022; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Details supplied: Abhaile Respite Centre, Listowel - service provided by St John of God – has had to close on multiple weekends due to “emergency situations”

Dear Deputy Daly,

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.

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 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 child to move from Abhaile to a more suitable residential placement as soon as possible.

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 a successful conclusion to the current emergency situation for this child. 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. There is ongoing communication with families by representatives from HSE Disabilities in Kerry as well as SJOG Abhaile staff.

I trust this clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely,



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

