

31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

Deputy Pat Buckley  
Dáil Éireann  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 14318/22**

**“To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that residents of the Owenacurra Health Centre, Midleton, County Cork have told the HSE that they do not want to leave the centre and want to remain in the centre as it is their forever home and want to see all the services retained despite the HSE saying that the centre is not fit for purpose”**

**Details supplied: the residents want assurance from the Minister and the HSE that the Owenacurra Health Centre will remain open and its associated services retained.**

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 by our Regulator.

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 safety and wellbeing of residents is our utmost priority and concern. We understand that the Owenacurra Centre has been their home, and we will do everything to make sure that their move to a new home is as easy and as smooth as possible.


Our priority is to make sure that we identify the most suitable placement for every resident based on their assessed needs, will and preferences. The process of finding the most appropriate alternative placements for all residents of the Owenacurra Centre is currently underway and engagements will continue for several more months, so as to achieve our aim of finding the most appropriate

placements possible and minimise disruption for residents.

A commitment to source a community house in Middleton town was made to facilitate any resident of Owenacurra that may be suitable for this facility or any service user in East Cork. The model for this service would be rehabilitation focussed with visiting healthcare professional staff supporting the residents. In addition we have provided assurances that we will explore options to relocate and reinstate the day service in the town as soon as possible.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind Regards,



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

