

27th May 2022

Claire Kerrane
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ ref 26711/22 – St. Brendan's, Ballinasloe CNU.

Dear Deputy Kerrane,

I refer to PQ ref 26711/22 received on 20th May 2022 and due for response on 7th June 2022, regarding representations that you have made in respect of Respite and Step Down beds at St. Brendan's Community Nursing Unit, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you on this matter. The following response outlines the position.

Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit provided thirteen step down beds prior to Covid. With the Covid pandemic valid medical and IPC concerns were raised about bringing short term step down patients into care areas where they would be interspersed with long term care residents. The Chief Officer and the previous Head of Older People Services made the decision to centralise twenty-five step down beds in St. Brendan's Loughrea and this was part of the HSE Winter Plan. Further to concerns I raised in light of the IPC learnings from Covid and that single en-suite accommodation should be prioritised for long term residents it was agreed that thirteen step down beds would be relocated from St. Brendan's Loughrea to Merlin Park Community Nursing Unit in Galway City. Thirteen step down beds in Loughrea are available to Portiuncula and residents of East Galway and South Roscommon

Respite was never provided in Ballinasloe Community Nursing Unit prior to the Pandemic. Thirteen beds in Merlin Park CNU have been designated as respite beds. During the refurbishment and reconfiguration works in Merlin Park respite beds were provided on a temporary basis in a number of OPS facilities in Co. Galway where staffing permitted. The work in Merlin Park was completed in early April 2022 and the respite service in Merlin Park commenced.

I trust this response clarifies the matter in this instance.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhan O'Sullivan
General Manager
Older Peoples Service
Community Healthcare West