

27th October 2022

Deputy David Cullinane
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 52034/22

“To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE intends to downgrade the services in Bantry Hospital centre for mental healthcare and recovery from an 18-bed unit to 12 beds; if resources have been made available to rectify the situation; his views on whether this will have a detrimental impact on the community and the ability in future for the unit to provide acute care; the locations in which the displaced patients will be sent instead; his views on whether this will increase pressure on other frontline services in the area; if he will direct the HSE to implement the recommended changes; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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.

The Centre for Mental Health Care and Recovery (CMHCR), Bantry was opened on the 8th January 1996. CMHCR has been registered as an Approved Centre since 1st November 2006. The current period of registration commenced on the 1st March 2020 and the current maximum occupancy of the Approved Centre is 18 residents and patients. CMHCR Bantry is inspected on an annual basis by the Mental Health Commission.

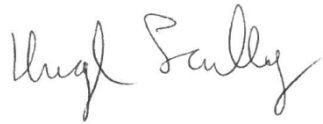
On 2nd Aug 2022, the Mental Health Commission wrote to the service stating its proposal to attach a condition to the registration of the Centre for Mental Health Care and Recovery Bantry which would reduce their bed capacity from 18 to 11. The only avenue to appeal against the MHC’s decision, is via the District Court and I can confirm that Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) have lodged this appeal in the District Court. As this matter is before the courts, we cannot say anything further. However, we will continue to engage with the Mental Health Commission in a positive manner.

It is worth noting that the service outlined its view to the Mental Health Commission that the proposed condition would adversely impact the patient population of West Cork and that it considered the suggested reduction in beds capacity from 18 to 11 to be unsafe and risk-increasing for this vulnerable patient population. It also noted that the service was engaged with HSE Estates at local level to review any possible re-configuration of the first floor bedroom accommodation and to explore additional options to centralise non patient specific processes. This would seek to provide additional communal space on the ward floor while the service makes interim capital submissions and undertakes the necessary service enhancements within the CMCR to support in provision of the optimum therapeutic space.

I wish to ensure you that CKCH are absolutely committed to maintaining and continuing a quality service at the Centre for Mental Health Care and Recovery in Bantry.

I trust the above clarified the queries raised.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hugh Scully". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

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