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3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023

Deputy Neasa Hourigan,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 18140/23**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the reason the east Cork HSE catchment area, with a population of circa 100,000, is having its 24-hour staffed residential mental health provision reduced from twenty single-room placements in 2021 to three single-room placements in 2023; the reason a development team due to be set up from May 2022 with a view to developing a new ten bed service for the region has not yet been formed; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

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

A community residence has been purchased in Midleton town for three residents. The model of service will be rehabilitation focussed with 24 hour healthcare professional staff supporting the residents. A refurbishment of the new property is required so as to comply with the regulations as noted in the community dwelling guidelines and for the dwelling to be upgraded to that of an A3 dwelling. This work will commence in the coming weeks and will be due for completion September/October 2023. As the property usage is classed as that of a community dwelling it is therefore exempt from the need for a planning application.

Following assessment by the Multi-disciplinary team and due consideration to the residents will and preference, three residents were identified as suitable for this house and there is on-going engagement with their families in this regard

The HSE will provide a new 10-bed rehabilitative residential unit in Midleton town. This service will have 24 hour staffing, and will have a focus on supporting people to return to their homes and communities

An initial appraisal of potential sites for a 10 bed unit in the Midleton area is to be undertaken and a full appraisal will be completed when the design team is appointed. They will then engage with people using mental health services in the area. The Owenacurra site is among the possible locations being considered. A Design Team ETender has been issued with a two week return timeframe. A full feasibility review of sites will follow the appointment of the design team. The current outline project plan is very ambitious with a goal of commencing building in Quarter 1 2024, with a view to completion of the unit by Quarter 1 2025, followed by a 6-8 week transition period prior to occupation. The development team will be appointed once we receive capital approval for the unit.

Our plan for residential mental health services in the East Cork area will ultimately deliver a much better service for people using our services now, and into the future and in line with Government policy.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Kind regards,

**Ms. Julie O' Neill**  
**Interim Head of Service**  
**Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**