



Ceann Seirbhísí Daoine Scothaosta

Limistéar Cúram Sláinte Pobail an
Oirdheiscirt | Lacken |
Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath | Cill Chainnigh |
R95 NV08

**Head of Service Older
Persons**

South East Community
Healthcare Area | Lacken |
Dublin Road | Kilkenny |
R95 NV08

Tel: 056 7784319

23rd January 2023

Mr Mattie McGrath, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

PQ 1446/23

To ask the Minister for Health if he will urgently move to re-open St. Brigid's Hospital, Carrick-on-Suir to reduce pressures from the acute services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy McGrath,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have reviewed the matter and liaised with colleagues in Primary Care Services and the following is the current position.

St. Brigid's premises did not meet the infection, prevention and control requirements nor was the building considered suitable to support the level of refurbishment and adaptations required to resume short stay inpatient services in line with safer better health care guidelines.

In order to preserve the community ethos at the existing St. Brigid's Hospital site, it was determined that St. Brigid's could be utilised as a hub for integrated Enhanced Community Care (ECC) incorporating both Integrated Care for the community. A number of adaptations were made to the building in order to enable St. Brigid's to be converted into a Community Health Centre to accommodate Community Healthcare Network 5 (CHN5) which covers across Carrick-on-Suir/Clonmel/Cahir/Clogheen. The building is now operational and the Community Healthcare Network Management team, GP Lead and Chronic Disease Team access as an administrative base and provide clinical outreach to other sites in South Tipperary. Health Promotion also work from St. Brigid's.

Community Services and Supports for Acute Hospitals

It is important to note that people in the Carrick-on-Suir and surrounding areas who require convalescent, respite and/or palliative care services are being supported in alternative settings in the South Tipperary area including St Theresa's Hospital Clogheen and HSE Cluain Arann in Tipperary town and HSE St Anthony's Unit Clonmel and private nursing homes.

There is ongoing close liaison between SECH Services for Older People and Acute Hospital Services. SECH Older Persons services continue to support our acute colleagues in both hospital avoidance and in the delivery of services to individuals post an acute episode.

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Two private Nursing Home beds, on contract to the HSE provide respite to individuals in the Community. The provision of respite maintains an individual in the Community and contributes to hospital avoidance. The utilisation of these beds is closely monitored to ensure maximum utilisation.

Tipperary University Hospital are advised of both short (convalescent and palliative) and long stay residential vacancies within Older Persons services on a daily basis thus facilitating the transfer of inpatients to either of these residential settings.

The Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons and the Frailty at the Front Door programmes supports either the frail older person to remain at home or to be discharged early, should they be admitted to the acute services.

Home Support services prioritise the allocation of home support services to those within the acute service in order to facilitate early discharge.

SECH Primary Care Services**Community Intervention Team South Tipperary (CIT)**

Community Intervention Teams (CIT) are specialist health professional teams who offer an extended service, usually that facilitate care in the community or home setting. The purpose of the service is to prevent unnecessary hospital admission or attendance, and to facilitate/enable early discharge of patients from the acute setting that are appropriate for CIT care. The service accepts referrals from acute hospitals, GPs and other community sources.

Community Intervention Teams are operational in each county throughout the South East including South Tipperary. Following an increase in clinical winter funding in 2022, the CIT in South Tipperary provides daily nursing interventions, seven days a week, in the community. Patients currently in the CIT service are receiving acute nursing care, in relation to heart failure, COPD, post-operative care, infections, diabetes, frailty, urology and oncology. The CIT referral hub continues to link daily with the hospital discharge teams in Tipperary University Hospital to plan and schedule the early discharge of patients who are clinical suitable.

GP Out of Hours

Caredoc have planned and arranged for additional staff on duty both clinical and non-clinical to meet the unprecedented demand on services throughout the clinical winter and in particular since the beginning of December 2022.

1. Additional support to EDs and the acute hospitals in the Southeast by reducing the volume of patients presenting to hospital and managing appropriate OOH's care in the community at a much higher volume of patients
2. Continue to provide timely consultations to elderly patients at home and in residential care avoiding hospital attendance

Caredoc also liaise with Older Persons Service and agreed to support discharges to Care of Elderly facilities over weekends.



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I trust this clarifies. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen McDaid'.

Helen McDaid
Head of Service Older Persons
South East Community Healthcare