



**Cúram Sláinte  
Phobail, Iarthar**  
ag freastal ar Ghailimh,  
Maighéo agus Ros Comáin

**Community  
Healthcare West**  
serving Galway, Mayo  
and Roscommon

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19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**Claire Kerrane, TD**  
**Leinster House**  
**Kildare Street**  
**Dublin 2**

PQ ref 34605/23

*\* To ask the Minister for Health if he will advise on visiting times at Roscommon Psychiatric Hospital; if he will provide an update on average waiting times at the hospital; if he will advise on staffing levels in the hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter \**

Dear Deputy Kerrane,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position;

Due to the easing of Covid restrictions visiting times have changed with visiting now available seven days per week with 6 visiting slots available each day. The Acute Unit in Roscommon caters for persons who are mentally very unwell. A direct comparison to a medical or surgical ward is not an appropriate comparison. All visiting slots are bookable and are for a duration of 30 minutes. The duration of visiting times is informed by patient feedback which has indicated that longer visiting times can be mentally draining for patients and they do not always promote recovery. Overall feedback from patients on visiting times is positive, particularly as patients have said that they have more time for other activities and therapeutic groups on the ward as part of their recovery care plan. The current arrangement provides for privacy and quality time with visitors. After each visit, the room used has to be cleaned as an infection control measure. This can delay the answering of the door/admission of a visitor. There is no internal waiting area within the unit for visitors. If either the patient or a family member requests additional visits, this can be facilitated following discussion with the patient, the nurse manager on the ward and in some cases the multidisciplinary team.

The garden area can be accessed from 09:00 to 19:30 each day. It is closed during staff handover between 19:30 and 20:00 and it re-opens again until 21:00. Staffing levels do not have any bearing on the opening times. On occasion, for patient health and safety reasons the garden may be closed for short periods, for example following an update to a risk assessment. This does not happen very often and any issues which arise are attended as quickly as possible as the service is aware for patient feedback of the importance patients attached to accessing the garden area.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlie Meehan', enclosed within a light grey rectangular border.

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**Charlie Meehan**  
**Head of Mental Health Services**  
**Community Healthcare West**