



**Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,**  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

**Office of the Head of Operations,**  
Disability Services/Social Care Division,  
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369  
Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Deputy Holly Cairns,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie](mailto:holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Cairns

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

#### **PQ 29838/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth further to Parliamentary Question No. 140 of 31 May 2023, to publish the findings of the Joint Review commissioned by the HSE and Tusla to establish the circumstances of this issue and the learnings from it (details supplied)*

(Details supplied): Woodbrook Lodge, Co Monaghan

#### **HSE Response**

Woodbrook Lodge is run by MMC Children's Services Limited. It is a Private for Profit organisation and the residential centre provides medium to long-term care for persons under 18 years of age with complex physical and emotional needs. This organisation accepts referrals from any part of the country and in that context may be funded by several Community Healthcare Areas.

Woodbrook Lodge is a large detached two-storey house in a quiet countryside setting on the outskirts of a town in Co Monaghan. It comprises four large bedrooms, living space, kitchen, sunroom, utility room and sitting room. It also has an internal lift supporting residents in wheelchairs to access their bedrooms on the first floor. The residents receive support on a twenty-four-hour basis.

A report, following an unannounced inspection of this centre on the 25/01/2023, was published by the Health Information and Quality Authority on 08/05/2023. There were adverse findings within the report whereby the centre was found to be non compliant with several regulations including Regulation 9: Residents' rights.

The HIQA Inspection Report stated that it was found during the inspection that two children were confined to the first floor of their home for a period of time due to a broken lift. Neither resident had been able to attend school, and one resident had missed a necessary appointment

At the time of the HIQA inspection on the 25/01/2023, Woodbrook Lodge was in receipt of funding from Community Healthcare Area 9 and Community Healthcare Area 7. In that context, both CHO areas have Service Arrangements in place with MMC Childrens Services Limited.

Since the inspection, the Registered Provider (MMC Childrens Services limited) have developed and implemented a service compliance improvement plan to address the non-compliances highlighted in the HIQA Inspection report.



In the Compliance Plan, the Provider states that:

*“In relation to a plan for residents to support them in leaving the first floor, should there be an issue with the lift, the plan was to relocate the bedrooms of the two residents affected most by the lift issues to avoid the problem ever impacting them significantly again. This has taken place.*

*The 3rd resident can be transferred up and down the stairs. A risk assessment has been drawn up to outline measures should the lift issue reoccur. This outlines safely transporting him up and downstairs by carrying him. The risk assessment will be reviewed regularly and should the resident become too big to carry, this will no longer be prohibited.*

*In addition, an electric chair has been purchased and will be used to safely transport the resident up and down the stairs. This chair arrived at the centre on the 21st February 2023 and the staff team were shown how to use it as a group on March 1st 2023. This is outlined in the Risk Assessment”.*

Both CHO 7 and CHO 9 immediately contacted and visited the service on foot of the HIQA report and have been in contact with MMC Childrens Services in relation to residents funded from their areas to seek assurances to the safety and well being of the children in the service.

The CHO Disability Services were not made aware of the unacceptable situation where a lift was broken in Woodbrook Lodge for a significant period during July and August 2022 and again in January 2023 and how this impacted on the residents of this centre.

CHO 9 Disability Services met the CEO of MMC Services Ltd immediately to seek clarity on matters relating to the lift in Woodbrook Lodge. The CEO of MMC Services Ltd apologised unreservedly for the significant gap in reporting the lift issue to CHO 9 Disability Services and for the associated unacceptable impacts of the broken lift.

The CEO of MMC Services Ltd confirmed that the lift maintenance in the house has been assigned to a new company with a maximum 24hr response time.

The CHO areas are reviewing process in place at the centre and CHO 9 Disability Services aim to review residential placements commissioned from private providers’ annually pending availability of appropriate resources including staff skill mix.

While many positive changes have been made over the last number of months, there continues to be a number of areas that require improvement.

A plan of improvements is agreed with the HSE and the Provider and these improvements will be reviewed in the next 3 months.

In addition, a Review is being commissioned by the HSE to establish the circumstances of this issue and any learnings from it. This review will be completed by the end of July 2023. The review relates specifically to the children availing of residential care.

The circumstances where children were so restricted and were unable to attend school or to participate in social and community activities is unacceptable. The HSE apologies to the children and families and will implement any learning from the review across services to ensure an event such as this is not repeated.

Yours sincerely,



**Bernard O'Regan**  
**Head of Operations - Disability Services,**  
**Community Operations**