



Ceann Seirbhíse, Meabhairshláinte
Baile Átha Cliath Theas, Cill Dara & Iarthar Chill Mhantáin
– Cúram Sláinte Pobail

Teach Darach, Páirc na Mílaoise, An Nás, Co. Chill Dara, W91 KDC2

Head of Service, Mental Health
Dublin South, Kildare & West Wicklow Community Healthcare
Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 KDC2
Email: cho7.pqreps@hse.ie Tel: (045) 882 597

Róisín Shortall TD,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2,
D02 XR20.

12th September 2023

Re: PQ 39233/23 To ask the Minister for Health the reason for the closure of the 16-bed sub-acute unit at St. James's Hospital psychiatric unit in August; if this decision was taken as a result of difficulties recruiting and retaining psychiatric nursing staff; the steps he is taking to address this shortfall in beds and ensure an adequate provision of services in CHO7; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

I refer to the above parliamentary question that you submitted to the Minister for Health, the Minister has asked that the HSE respond directly to you. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The HSE has taken the difficult decision to temporarily close the step down / sub-acute beds in Becket Ward which is part of HSE Jonathan Swift Approved Centre based on the grounds of St James Hospital. This unit provides step down beds only and does not take acute admissions.

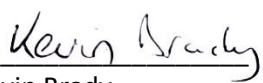
The temporary reduction in beds is not related to any funding difficulties, but to the challenges in hiring and retaining the nursing staff required to operate these units at full capacity, while maintaining the necessary standards of care and safety for all patients.

The health services continue to face challenges in recruiting necessary staff. The HSE is currently running national and international recruitment campaigns for Psychiatric Nursing staff, and we are also seeking to recruit from graduate programmes. We are exploring every possible avenue to recruit and hire Psychiatric Nursing staff.

Unfortunately it is not possible to give a specific reopening date for the affected centres. The situation remains under constant review. We and our staff greatly regret the effect this situation may have on patients and staff. We will continue to give the highest priority to all cases that require admission.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,


Kevin Brady,
Head of Service Mental Health.