

30th April, 2024.

Mr. David Stanton, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 17303/24

"To ask the Minister for Health the reason a building (details supplied) is not currently open and operating; when he expects the service to resume; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Details supplied: The McAuley Day Care Centre, Midleton, Co. Cork.

Dear Deputy Stanton,

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

The McAuley Day Centre in Midleton provides an essential service for the people of East Cork which delivers essential services such as nursing care and social support, health monitoring, activities (physical and social), meals for clients and social interaction opportunities. In addition, the McAuley Day Care Centre provides personal care assistance with items such as showering for 21 clients. Access to respite beds in Midleton Hospital ceased during the pandemic, and services were further impacted due to the recent flooding, resulting in an increased reliance by families on day care for a break.

The chef and MTA resigned/retired in December 2023 and staffing is further impacted by the remaining MTA staff being on certified sick leave. Alternative arrangements including out-sourcing meal provision, cross cover arrangements with other day care centres (which are in a similar staffing position) was attempted but has not worked out. In order to resolve this issue, derogation has been sought for the replacement of the permanent 0.5 WTE chef post which remains vacant and 0.5 WTE MTA vacancy, but approval for same hasn't been received to date.

However, I am pleased to inform you that McAuley Day centre re-opened on Wednesday 17/4/24, with the support of agency staff, including an agency chef. The agency staff are arranged on a day to day basis, and is subject to change quite readily.

I acknowledge that it was upsetting for all involved to close the day care centre, including service users, their families and staff. We are all looking forward to a relaxation to the recruitment embargo, when we hope to recruit permanent staff, which will help prevent this issue arising again.

If I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Priscilla Lynch
Head of Service - Primary Care,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare