

Head of Service for Older Persons
HSE South West - Health Service Executive
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Ceann na Seirbhíse do Dhaoine Scothaosta
FSS Iardheiscirt -Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Teach Caha, Párc Ghnó & Teicneolaíochta
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12th May 2025

Deputy Michael Cahill, T.D.,
Dail Eireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 19590/25:

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of posts are currently advertised in Cahersiveen Community Hospital, County Kerry; what positions have been advertised; how long are these posts advertised; and if she will make a statement on the matter”.

PQ ref 19600/25:

“To ask the Minister for Health to open additional beds in Cahersiveen Community Hospital, County Kerry as a matter of priority; the number and how soon these additional beds will be open; and if she will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Cahill,

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

Caherciveen Community Hospital is located on the peninsula in South Kerry. It is a 2 storey building accommodating up to 33 residents in 20 bedrooms. The ground floor consists of 20 bedrooms, kitchen, bathrooms, staff rooms, Day Hospital and Fertha View (Mental Health) day care centre. The first floor consists of offices, store rooms, kitchenette, training room, Records room, ICT rooms and staff changing room. The hospital provides care for residents requiring long-term care, respite, convalescent or palliative care.

Challenges can exist in recruiting staff to some of our more rural community hospital locations. Staff shortages can temporarily occur in our community hospitals as a result of retirements, resignations and various other leave including flexible working time arrangements which are available to our staff. Maternity leave and sick leave exacerbate the staffing issues in addition to the peninsula location. 29 beds are currently operational of the 33 available at Caherciveen Community Hospital.

Unfortunately there may be occasions where beds are not occupied to 100% capacity as a result of recruitment or staffing issues. To ensure the safety of both our residents and our staff, bed capacity is dependent on adequate staffing levels and requires an appropriate staff skill-mix to be in place.

In relation to **PQ 19590/25**, HSE South West has undertaken many recruitment initiatives, at both a national and international level, to fill positions at our community hospitals and maintain or increase capacity. 3.2 posts are currently identified as requiring to be filled at Caherciveen Community Hospital and recruitment efforts are ongoing in this regard.

One post is currently at pre-recruitment checks stage and two posts will be expressed out to a new panel currently being formed.

With regard to **PQ 19600/25**, Caherciveen Community Hospital has been impacted by staffing challenges but we are committed to re-opening temporarily-closed beds at the hospital to meet the needs of the local community, contingent on successful recruitment. On-going recruitment campaigns are being progressed against a backdrop of a limited pool of available candidates, which is reflective of the recruitment challenges being experienced in the health sector.

The number and skill mix of staff has to be appropriate to meet the needs of the residents living in the unit so that they continue to receive an optimal standard of care. Provision and maintenance of enhanced services for our service-users in Caherciveen and the wider Kerry region is a HSE priority and we are committed to maximising all available supports for older people and their families in this area.

I trust this clarifies the position and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Daly
Head of Service for Older Persons

