

03/07/2025

Deputy Liam Quaide
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 33396/25

“To ask the Minister for Health if she has sought advice on the compliance of a proposed 50-bed set of bungalows for mental health residential services on the grounds of Saint Stephen's Hospital, Glanmire, with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Person with a Disability; and from whom she received this advice.”

Dear Deputy Quaide,

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.

The HSE's Capital Plan, derived from the Programme for Government and funded from the National Development Plan, aligns with the strategic priorities of the Minister for Health, Department of Health and the HSE. It provides significant public investment in health infrastructure to meet current need, to cater for an estimated population growth of one million people and to respond to the changing demographic profile in Ireland. It also supports the vision of high quality, safe, accessible and sustainable healthcare, enabled by capital funding. This funding is managed to achieve value for money in accordance with the Department of Health, Strategic Healthcare Investment Framework and the Common Appraisal Framework, aligned to the Department of Public Expenditure NDP Delivery and Reform, Infrastructure Guidelines and the Capital Projects Manual and Approvals Protocol of the HSE.

As outlined in previous responses in regard to this project, the HSE recognises that within Article 1 (Purpose) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that people with certain mental health needs are encompassed as follows:

‘Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.’

Within the Convention Article 9, provides for *Access to Services*

(a) *Mental Health Services must be accessible, inclusive, and provided in a way that enables full participation in society.*

The Health Service Executive acknowledges the importance of ensuring that all mental health services align with national policy and international human rights frameworks. Sharing the Vision – A Mental Health Policy for Everyone (2020) emphasises a recovery-oriented, person-centred approach that prioritises community-based care, social inclusion, and the protection of human rights, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD).

While the policy promotes the delivery of mental health services in the least restrictive and most integrated settings possible, it also recognises that specialist residential care remains necessary for individuals with



complex needs who require intensive, multidisciplinary support. It is important to highlight that the planned development at St. Stephen's Hospital, Glanmire, is to replace existing bed capacity within the grounds of St. Stephens Hospital. The units proposed for replacement are currently regulated by the Mental Health Commission as an approved centre. It is also important to note that the provision of this replacement capacity with a new build is a condition on the registration of the approved centre for a number of years. In delivering this replacement bed capacity the design will complement and enhance existing community-based services, ensuring that individuals receive the appropriate level of care while maintaining strong links with their local communities.

Additionally, Sharing the Vision highlights the need for mental health services to be embedded within broader health and social care systems. The development at St. Stephen's Hospital will align with this approach by incorporating modern, recovery-focused facilities that support individualised care plans, facilitate transition to community living where possible, and uphold the dignity and autonomy of service users.

The HSE remains committed to the principles of Sharing the Vision and will continue to work towards a balanced system that ensures both high-quality residential care and strengthened community services, in line with best practices and human rights obligations. I trust the above clarifies the queries raised. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Declan Cronin
Acting Head of Service
Mental Health Services