

**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  
Bóthar na Modh Feirme, Corcaigh  
**Tel: 021 4923854**

7<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Deputy Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire, T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 33931/25**

**“To ask the Minister for Health the number of publicly funded respite beds the HSE had in private nursing homes in Cork, in each of the past five years, including 2025”.**

Dear Deputy O Laoghaire,

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.

Respite care for older persons is generally a pre-planned short admission of one or two week’s duration and dependent on the needs of the carers. Access to a respite bed can be arranged by an individual’s Public Health Nurse/Community Nurse and is dependent on bed availability. The Public Health Nursing service manages the schedule for respite beds and will, where a cancellation arises, offer available beds so that optimal use is made of the available capacity.

Residential respite care for older persons may be provided in the community in HSE residential care settings, by agreement with voluntary organisations or by contracted private facilities. The provision of residential respite services has come under increasing pressure in recent years due to a number of factors, including an increase in the number of people who are seeking access to respite as a result of general population increase; increasing levels of complexity across the sector due to better and improved health care and the impacts of regulatory standards and national policy on capacity.

Respite beds are categorised as short stay beds; short stay beds can incorporate respite, convalescent, palliative, rehabilitation or transitional care beds. Respite beds in private nursing homes, funded and utilised by Services for Older Persons, HSE South West, can be interchangeable for use in response to particular service needs and therefore it is important to note that the total number of respite beds can occasionally fluctuate due to this interchangeability.

The below table sets out the respite beds currently utilised and funded in private/voluntary nursing homes by **Services for Older Persons** in the Cork region. .

Private Nursing Home respite beds – Services for Older Persons, HSE SW	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Cork</b>	29	29	31	24	34

**Note:** This data does not take into account emergency respite beds in private nursing homes which are managed and operated by our colleagues in the Public Health Nursing service, under the remit of Primary Care.

HSE South West acknowledges that provision of respite is hugely important for carers as it offers an opportunity to take a break from the stresses of caring. The HSE is committed to maximising all available supports and continuously

reviews services in line with population health planning and Sláintecare principles, to ensure the ongoing development of modern services, including respite provision, for older people in the Cork region.

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

Yours sincerely,

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**Jackie Daly**  
**Head of Service for Older Persons**

