

Head of Service for Older Persons
HSE South West - Health Service Executive
Caha House, Business & Technology Park
Model Farm Road
Cork Eircode: T12 XHT4

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

26th June 2025

Deputy Michael Cahill, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Dublin 2

PQ ref 34043/25

“To ask the Minister for Health to immediately introduce incentives to attract the required staff to such places as Caherciveen Community Hospital on the Iveragh Peninsula in South Kerry, where the HSE has confirmed that beds remain unoccupied at the facility, including two palliative care beds due to staffing shortages; 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 Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

Cahirciveen Community Hospital has been temporarily impacted by staffing challenges and it is acknowledged that four beds are currently closed due to staff shortages. However, it is important to note that the short stay beds currently open at the hospital are not ‘ring-fenced’ for a specific defined use and are interchangeable depending on the demand in the area at a particular time. Management at Cahirciveen Community Hospital has continued to strive to ensure that a Palliative Care service is available to the community when required. When a Palliative Care case presents, all efforts are made to facilitate this admission and to provide this service to the absolute highest standard.

Challenges in recruiting staff to some of our more rural hospital locations are well documented, while temporary staff shortages due to retirements, resignations and various other leave including maternity leave and sick leave can temporarily impact bed capacity at the hospital. Bed capacity is configured around adequate staffing levels and an appropriate staff skill-mix has to be in place to ensure the safety of both our residents and our staff.

Provision of incentives to attract required staff to work within our rural community hospitals is not currently provided for within HSE recruitment policies aligned to the code of practice for recruitment which is underpinned by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The HSE South West is committed to re-opening temporarily-closed beds at Cahirciveen Community Hospital as soon as possible to meet the needs of the local community, contingent on successful recruitment. A local bespoke campaign is currently being planned to address staff shortages.

Provision and maintenance of optimal services for our service-users in Cahirciveen and the wider Iveragh region is a priority for HSE South West.

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

