

28th March 2025

Deputy Pat Buckley,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 11052/25

“To ask the Minister for Health for a progress update on the reopening of a respite centre (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Details supplied: “the Owenacurra Respite centre in Midleton County Cork. It was originally a 20/21 bed respite centre but was closed in 2023. It was then promised that a new 10 bed centre would open on that very site”

Dear Deputy Buckley,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for a response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Mental Health Services are progressing with the development of a new 10-bed rehabilitative residential unit in Midleton town, located on the site of the current Owenacurra facility. This purpose-built facility is designed to meet the needs of the local community and will complement the work of the local community multi-disciplinary mental health team.

The commencement of the new build was delayed due to several factors. The primary cause of delay was the necessity for a full redesign following the major flooding event in Midleton in October 2023. The HSE is currently advancing the updated design process to ensure that the new facility is constructed with enhanced flood protection measures. These include raised floor levels, ramp access, and other flood resilience elements.

Additional site investigations revealed poor ground conditions, necessitating a significant redesign of the foundation structure. To address these challenges, the project has integrated 'Modern Methods of Construction' aimed at reducing both the construction and operational carbon footprint of the facility. Furthermore, progress was hindered due to discrepancies in the legal folio boundaries. Ongoing discussions with adjoining property owners are taking place to resolve these matters effectively.

Planning permission has been granted for the development, subject to a number of conditions. The construction tendering process is scheduled to commence at the end of March 2025. Once contractors are engaged, a specific timeline will be determined. However, it is currently anticipated that construction will commence on-site in June 2025. The project is projected to take 14-16 months to complete once commenced.

The HSE remains committed to delivering this essential facility and will continue to provide updates as the project progresses.

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