



**Oifig na Bainisteoir Limistéir Chomhtháite  
Cúraim Sláinte Chorcaí Thuaidh agus  
Thoir.**

FSS Iardheiscirt, Áras na Ceachan, Páirc  
Ghnó agus Teicneolaíochta, Bóthar na Modh  
Feirme, Corcaigh

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18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

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

**PQ ref 26524/25**

**“To ask the Minister for Health to ensure that patients that are being discharged from University Hospital Kerry or Cork University Hospital to community hospitals/nursing homes within the county are transferred to the nearest facility to where the patient/family reside (details supplied); and if she will make a statement on the matter”.**

**Details Supplied: There are many cases where this is not happening in Kerry and whereby families are having to travel for up to five to six hour return trips to visit their loved ones, whereas this can be avoided by placing them in the nearest facility to where they reside.**

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.

With regard to short stay bed availability in Kerry, high levels of emergency attendances and admissions across the Acute hospital sector in recent months resulted in support of a range of actions to alleviate acute hospital pressures, including discharge of patients whose acute phase of care was completed into nursing homes while awaiting transfer either home or into long-term residential care. While we appreciate that a nearer location would be preferable for some of these patients, any community support beds offered were and are completely dependent upon availability.

With regard to long stay bed availability, community hospital (or public nursing home) waiting lists are maintained chronologically and are managed by the Continuing Care Placement Coordinators in HSE South West. Individuals are offered placements in turn as vacancies arise, based on their position on the waiting list and the facility's ability to meet their assessed care needs. Under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme (NHSS or Fair Deal), all applicants have the right to choose their preferred nursing home—public or private—provided that a bed is available and the facility can meet their assessed requirements. This principle of choice remains a fundamental aspect of the scheme and cannot be compromised by the HSE.

While public nursing home beds are allocated through HSE-managed lists, private nursing homes maintain their own independent waiting lists. Applicants may place themselves on multiple lists across both public and private facilities. In many cases, individuals opt to enter a private nursing home while awaiting a vacancy in their preferred public facility. It is important to note that a vacancy in a HSE facility does not guarantee immediate placement. Prior to admission, a reassessment is conducted to confirm that the applicant's current care needs can be met by the unit.

To uphold fairness and transparency, community admissions are based on both the chronological order of applications and the facility's ability to meet the applicant's care requirements. The reasons for choosing a particular facility may vary, but the most equitable approach remains a systematic allocation of available beds based on the applicant's place on the waiting list.

The HSE remains committed to delivering safe, high-quality residential care that respects individual choice while ensuring fairness in admissions through a transparent and consistent process.



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

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**Sonya Cotter**

**Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East**

**HSE South West**