



10th October 2025

Deputy Michael Cahill, TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 51843/25

"To ask the Minister for Health if she recognises the concerns of residents in the Iveragh and Dingle peninsulas in County Kerry, who feel they have long suffered from substandard health services due to their remoteness from the centres of decision-making; and if she agrees that the need to travel long distances for basic care amounts to a form of geographic discrimination."

Dear Deputy Cahill,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) South West acknowledges the concerns expressed by residents of the Iveragh and Dingle peninsulas in County Kerry regarding access to healthcare services.

Providing health services in rural and remote areas such as these presents well-recognised challenges, particularly in recruiting and retaining healthcare staff. These difficulties arise from a combination of factors, including geographic location, growing demand for services, and national shortages of key healthcare professionals such as nurses and allied health staff.

The HSE South West is actively engaged in efforts to address these staffing shortages across essential services including Older Persons Services, Primary Care, Mental Health, Day Care, and Home Care. In particular, the HSE remains committed to maintaining services and inpatient beds at both West Kerry Community Hospital, Dingle, and St. Anne's Community Hospital, Cahersiveen.

While the necessity to travel longer distances for certain services is an unfortunate reality in rural healthcare delivery, the HSE strongly refutes any suggestion that the residents of these peninsulas are subject to geographic discrimination or that their healthcare needs are being neglected.

The HSE continues to work to improve service availability and accessibility to ensure equitable healthcare for all residents across Kerry, regardless of location.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Julie O'Neill
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry
HSE South West