



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM, SOUTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

FOREWORD

The Regional Health Fora were established in January, 2006, as an integral part of the reform of the Health Services.

The Forum's function is:

"To make such representations to the Executive as the Forum considers appropriate on the range and operation of the health and personal social services provided within its functional area".

I wish to acknowledge the commitment of the Members and the support of the Executive since I took up my position as Chairperson and I will endeavour to honour my commitment for the upcoming year.

I attach the Annual Report for 2024 which outlines the activities of the Forum to 31st December 2024

On approval by members, the Report will be forwarded to your respective County or City Councils Managers for circulation for the information of all members who may be interested in the work undertaken by the Forum in 2024.

**Cllr Ann Marie Ahern
Chairperson**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM – SOUTH

Chairperson: Cllr Ann Marie Ahern

Vice-Chairperson: Cllr Pat Hayes

SOUTH EAST COMMITTEE:

Chairperson: Cllr John Coonan

Vice-Chairperson: Cllr Roger Kennedy

SOUTH WEST COMMITTEE:

Chairperson: Cllr Finbarr Harrington

Vice-Chairperson: Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Carlow County Council

Fergal Browne

Daniel Pender

Adrienne Wallace

Cork County Council

Ann Marie Ahern

Danny Collins

Caroline Cronin

Donimic Finn

Finbarr Harrington

Pat Hayes

Mary Linehan Foley

Tony O'Shea

Liam Quaide replaced by Cllr Ann Bambury

Cork City Council

Peter Horgan

Fiona Kerins

Margaret McDonnell

John Sheehan

Kerry County Council

Jackie Healy-Rae

Deirdre Ferris

Marie Moloney

Norma Moriarty

Mikey Sheehy

Kilkenny County Council

Tomas Breathnach

John Coonan

Pat Dunphy

Ger Frisby

Tipperary County Council

David Dunne

Roger Kennedy
Marie Murphy
Michael Smith

Waterford County Council

Declan Barry
Liam Brazil
Damian Geoghegan
Conor McGuinness replaced by Cllr John Pratt
John O'Leary
Adam Wyse

Wexford County Council

Cathal Byrne
John Fleming
Frank Staples
Joe Sullivan

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Regional Health Forum South

Background

The Health Act 2004 provided a legal framework for the establishment of the Health Service Executive (HSE) on a statutory basis. With effect from 1 January 2005, the HSE took over responsibility for the management and delivery of health services from the Eastern Regional Health Authority, the health boards and a number of other agencies.

Part 8 of the Act – “Public Representation and User Participation” – sets out at Section 42, the establishment of four Regional Health Forums (RHF).

The function of the RHF is “to make such representations to the Executive [of the HSE] as the forum considers appropriate on the range and provision of health and personal social services provided in its functional area...” The RHF’s comprise of representatives from the City and County Councils within the functional area of each Forum.

The establishment day for the Regional Health Forum, South was January 1st 2006. Its functional area is the administrative area of Carlow County Council, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Kerry County Council, Kilkenny County Council, South Tipperary County Council, Waterford County Council and Wexford County Council. These Councils between them have appointed the 39 members of the Regional Health Forum, South.

The other 3 Regional Health Forums are:-

- Regional Health Forum, Dublin-Mid Leinster (40 members)
- Regional Health Forum, Dublin and North East (29 members)
- Regional Health Forum, West (40 members)

In line with Section 42(7) of the Health Act 2004 the Health Service Executive provides administrative support to the Regional Health Forums. This is provided through the Regional Health Office.

Regional Health Forum Meetings

The Forum meets 6 times in a full year. Meetings in 2024 were held on:

- Thursday 15th February 2024 – cancelled due to Forsa dispute
- Thursday 28th March 2024
- Thursday 2nd May 2024
- Thursday 18th July 2024
- Thursday 19th September 2024
- Thursday 7th November 2024

The HSE is represented at the meetings by the following Management:

- Chief Executive Officer of the South/South West Hospitals Group
- Chief Officer of the Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
- Chief Officer of the South East Community Healthcare
- Chief Operations Officer of the Ireland East Hospital Group

Committee meetings

The Regional Health Forum, South has established 2 Committees:-

(a) South East Committee

(b) South West Committee

These Committees meet rotating between locations and furnishing reports and recommendations to the Forum. The Committee meetings for 2024 were held on:

Tuesday 16th January South East Committee Meeting – Cancelled Forsa Dispute

Thursday 18th January South West Committee Meeting– Cancelled Forsa Dispute

Tuesday 9th April South East Committee Meeting

Thursday 11th April South West Committee Meeting

Tuesday 8th October South East Committee Meeting

Thursday 10th October South West Committee Meeting

Tuesday 3rd December South East Committee Meeting

Thursday 5th December South West Committee Meeting

Standing Orders

Standing Orders which regulate the proceedings and business of meetings were agreed and adopted by the Forum members on the 4th May, 2006.

At the September meeting 2011 a Report on Proposed Revision of Standing Orders and Other Arrangements to Improve the Operation of the Regional Health Forum and its Committees was approved by members and agreed changes were implemented.

Notices of Motions

As per Standing Orders each Member can submit one Notice of Motion 10 clear days prior to a meeting. Motions are circulated with the agenda to each Member and debated at the meeting. In 2024 32 Motions were adopted by Members and forwarded to the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, HSE.

Questions

As per the Standing Orders, one written Question per Member can be submitted to the Regional Health Office ten clear days before a Forum meeting. Written answers prepared by the appropriate service are circulated at the meeting. In 2024, Regional Health Forum South Members submitted 23 Questions.

Presentations

The following presentations were delivered to the Forum Members:-

- Presentation on the new Regional Health Areas given by Mr. Liam Woods, National Director Health Regions Programme.
- Presentation on Fair Deal to be given by Mr Ray Dwyer, Home support Office.

- Presentation given by Ms Martina Queally, Regional Executive Officer, Dublin and South East
- Presentation from Dr Carmel Mullaney, Director of Public Health, HSE Dublin and South East on 'Regional Population Health Profile'
- Outline of new structures and introduction of Integrated Health Area Managers – HSE Dublin and South East
- Update from National Ambulance Service – HSE South West

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING March 2024

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 5(a) and 5(f) on Agenda refers:

(a) "That the executive please provide a detailed report on the progress by the HSE to deliver the committed 60 bed Community Nursing Unit for Cashel."

Cllr Declan Burgess

(f) "Can I please have an update on the new Community Nursing Unit for Cashel Co Tipperary."

Cllr Roger Kennedy

The HSE remains committed to providing a new 60-bed Community Nursing Unit for Cashel.

The HSE engaged the architectural consultancy firm Wejchert Architects to progress the option of developing the site at Palmers Hill. This firm had been the leaders of the Design Team for the project in St. Patrick's Hospital, Cashel and are familiar with the requirements for the proposed building.

The architects had discussions with Tipperary Co. Co. and an initial planning response identified a number of issues of concern to the planners; which were not unexpected. These related primarily to the access to the proposed site and the current zoning of the lower field. The HSE intends to discuss rezoning with the local county council.

The HSE is of the opinion that the proposed building, which would accommodate the patients/clients from Our Lady's Hospital, would be considered a Community Building rather than a Nursing Home, and therefore this proposed building would be deemed "open to consideration", in terms of planning. There is no "Healthcare" designation in the Planning Zoning Matrix of use. However, this proposal is for a Community Nursing Unit; as distinct from a Nursing Home.

The proposed use of this site may involve the purchase of additional land to allow for better access. There was a property valuation carried out by a local auctioneering practice on the purchase of some property and this is being considered at the moment. Topographical surveys of the site are also currently being procured.

This proposed site at Palmers Hill has the distinct advantage of being in the ownership of the HSE, and the site provides a good aspect for this type of facility.

The HSE is also examining other sites in the locality, as part of an overall option appraisal for the project. However, at present, the preference is for its own site at Palmers Hill.

**Stephanie Lynch,
Acting Chief Officer
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 5(b) on Agenda refers:

“What is the most recent update on the development of a standalone Oncology Unit at UHK and what are the project timelines?”

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

In relation to the Standalone Oncology unit at UHK the Estates Department are continuing to progress the Stage 1 – concept design process and have regular scheduled meetings with the Design Team with a view to completing the Stage 1 Report late Q2 2024. Helipad / Aviation are the main issues to close out. The estimated completion and hand over date for the new unit is 2026.

Mark Kane
Assistant National Director
Capital & Estates Office HSE South

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 5(c) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE please advise as to how many CAMHS teams in Cork City and County are without a permanent child psychologist; how many have a permanent child psychologist and what alternative measures are in place where there is not a permanent child psychologist available, particularly regarding extending the NTPF to child psychology assessments and use of the recently established regional psychological hubs."

Cllr Eileen Lynch

CAMHS is a specialist service for children up to 18 years of age and their families who are experiencing moderate to severe emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. There are a total of eight teams covering the Cork city and county region. The service is multidisciplinary which means there are people from different clinical professions working here including Psychiatry, Clinical Psychology, Social Work, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Clerical Support.

The table below identifies the eight CAMHS teams based in Cork and the Psychology resources available within each team. All posts are filled on a permanent basis unless indicated otherwise on the table.

Psychology tries to work across teams as far as is possible and practicable to support teams who have vacant psychology posts. For example teams that are co-located (i.e. North Lee North & North Lee West who are both based in City General Hospital, and the South Lee 1&2 teams who are both based in Blackrock Hall PC building) these co-locations often combine psychology resources to run intervention groups etc. In non-co-located teams other group interventions are offered across a number of CAMHS teams (both in person and online) to make them accessible to those teams who have an identified gap in team resources. The groups provided include DBT-A, Family Connections groups, Circle of Security groups, OCD parent workshops to name a few.

Area	Post Status
North Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Principal Specialist (0.5 direct clinical work in North Cork and 0.5 CAMHS Cork Operational Governance)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior (permanent post holder on maternity leave but post is filled on a temp basis in the interim – permanent post holder due back in May 2024) • 2 x Staff grades (one of which is vacant as the post holder is acting in the senior post on the team) • 1 x Psychology Assistant (Temporary)
North Lee North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade - vacant due to maternity leave and unable to backfill from panel. Due back end July 2024.
North Lee East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade (vacant at present but has been accepted from panel and person is due to commence June 2024)
North Lee West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade
South Lee 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade (currently vacant)
South Lee 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade (currently vacant)
South Lee 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 x Senior • 1 x Staff grade (filled on temporary basis)
West Cork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Senior • 2 x Staff grade (1 post vacant due to maternity leave)

In addition to the above teams, CAREDS is the Child and Adolescent Regional Eating Disorder Service for Cork and Kerry. It provides specialist eating disorder care for young people under the age of 18 years who have an eating disorder. CAREDS is an outpatient service based in Cork. Young people must be physically well enough to be outside of hospital care in order to attend the service. CAREDS has 1 Senior Psychology post attached to the team.

Eist Linn is a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Inpatient Unit for young people aged 13 to 17 years of age. The referral pathway is through the Community CAMHS team. There are two Senior Psychology posts on the Eist Linn team.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motions 5(d) and (e) on Agenda refers:

- (d) "Cork & Kerry HSE orthodontic surgeries, there is now a 6year waiting list for children to obtain orthodontics. Currently the median age of a child's first time visit to the orthodontist is 14yrs/15yrs . The HSE are telling patients that they will be 20 to 21years of age before they can access their orthodontic treatment. What are the HSE doing to bring the waiting lists down?"

Cllr Audrey Buckley

- (e) "To ask the HSE do they think it is acceptable that teenagers have to wait 5 to 6 years for orthodontic treatment. Resulting in being an adult before receiving the treatment."

Cllr Michael Foley

The primary goal of the Orthodontic Service is to improve the appearance and function of misaligned or crooked teeth. The HSE provides free orthodontic treatment to children with the most severe orthodontic problems. The criteria used to decide whether a child qualifies for treatment in the HSE is determined by nationally agreed eligibility guidelines known as IOTN. Qualification for treatment is determined at a child's 6th class screening using these nationally agreed eligibility guidelines based on an international grading system (IOTN). Please find attached which is the full list of guidelines. All referrals for the service are triaged and given a priority rating by the clinical team.

A number of staff from the Orthodontics Service were redeployed during COVID which led to a further increase in waiting list numbers for assessment, an increased number of children waiting and longer waiting times for treatment; and we are still catching-up in this regard.

To improve waiting list numbers and times the Cork and Kerry:

- Have ongoing validation of waiting lists.
- Recruited a new part time consultant orthodontist, who commenced at the end of September 2023.

- Targeted areas for example since the new consultant commenced, she has been focusing on assessments. The waiting list for assessment has reduced from 2943 at the end of Q2 2023 to 2154 currently.
- Business proposals to both increase theatre time and reconfigure resources namely consultant capacity is in final stage, it is envisaged with approval this will ultimately reduce the waiting list by circa 20-30% however this is caveated on receiving the relevant approval to proceed.

In addition, the National Oral Health Office is successfully managing a waiting list initiative across Ireland to successfully outsource waiting lists to private providers. Cork and Kerry are fully participating in this waiting list initiative. However, unfortunately the government e-tender process has a lack of available approved private providers in Cork. The National Oral Health Office are actively pursuing solutions for this regional challenge. To date 207 patients have come off the waiting list.

Orthodontic Treatment NOHO Waiting List Initiative 2023 (TWLI)	No. of patients contacted NOHO TWLI	No. of patients accepting transfer to NOHO TWLI	No. of patients who informed NOHO that they are under private treatment	No. of patients who did not respond to two letters of offer	Number of patients opting to remain on HSE waiting list
Total Patient No. CKCH	239	122	18	67	32

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 5(g) on Agenda refers:

"To help alleviate pressures on Tralee A&E, that the HSE would commit to providing a Minor Injury Clinic including an X-Ray facility in Killarney Town."

Cllr John O'Donoghue

South/South West Hospital Group in conjunction with Cork Kerry Community Healthcare are planning to develop a local injuries unit in Kerry. Plans for this are ongoing.

Dr Gerard O'Callaghan
Chief Operations Officer
South/South West Hospital Group

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 5(h) on Agenda refers:

"Requesting an Update on the Care and Rehabilitation Mental Health Service Unit at St. Stephen's Health Campus in Glanmire"

Cllr Catherine Cronin

In early 2022 Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) Mental Health Services convened a working group with a project lead and seconded nurse planner to deliver a Cork Mental Health Services Strategic Capital Plan, 2022. The Plan is for the medium term and sets out the requirements of CKCH to deliver acceptable, recovery orientated acute and semi acute environments. Key services for improvement were outlined in the plan needing a commitment to on-going investment including:

- Plans to rebuild appropriate residential services in St Stephen's in Glanmire

The 5- 10 year long term capital plan outlines an investment of €160m to bring Cork Approved Centres to a modern, fit for purpose standard. The totality of these requirements are not currently included on the National Capital Plan. However the HSE welcomes the inclusion of continuing care as outlined below, in St Stephens Hospital in 2023 National Capital Plan.

The Cork Mental Health Approved Centre's Strategic Capital Plan was submitted to National Mental Health Services in March, 2022 and support will be sought from the Department to fund this plan in its entirety over the next decade. CKCH have welcomed the recent confirmation of development of a 50 bed, Continuing Care and Rehabilitation Mental Health Unit on the grounds of the St. Stephen's Health Campus in Glanmire and has been included in the HSE's 2022 Capital Programme.

A full Capital Submission for this project was submitted to the HSE's National Capital & Property Committee in 2023 and the full capital allocation for this project will be determined upon the receipt of this submission.

In 2022 Q4, initial funding had been provided to progress topographical and drainage site surveys for the proposed location of the new building. The final capital budget for the project will cover all the capital costs associated with the project including construction costs, design fees, and other costs associated with the project. The proposed plan is to develop 5 Households, each comprising of 10 single bed & en-suite rooms.

While awaiting the construction of the new Continuing Care and Rehabilitation Mental Health Unit, the service continues to address issues with the existing buildings in St Stephens Hospital Campus. Over the last number of years, Mental Health services have invested in minor works improving the standard of the various units in areas such as en-suite bathrooms, lounges, common areas and flooring.

As for the current status of the Hospital, Mental Health Services has 103 allocated beds across five units within St Stephens's. These units are as follows:

- Unit 1 is a 16 bedded unit and provides residential care predominately to people over the age of 65 but also caters for younger people over the age of 18, long-term residents and palliative care to older people with dementia.
- Unit 2 is a 25 bedded unit providing care and treatment to those under the Psychiatry of Later Life (POLL) team.
- Unit 3 contains 18 beds and delivers care to male residents with severe and enduring mental illness and is developing as part of a step-down/rehabilitation pathway from the local Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).
- Unit 4 has 19 beds and is the acute admissions unit for the North Cork area.
- Unit 8 (Floor 2) is located in the main building. It has 25 beds to provide care to residents with enduring mental illness.

Residents from all units have access to the Valley View Day Centre which is also located on the grounds of St. Stephen's Hospital.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

Motion 5(i) on Agenda refers:

"That the Regional Health Forum South endorses a view that a letter be written to the minister that procedures be put in place to make Health a curriculum and be prepared, developed and introduced as a matter of priority into our educational system."

Cllr John Coonan

Discussion to be held in Chambers amongst the members present.

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 6(a) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE outline what steps are being taken to improve capacity in our GP services in South Tipperary. In the report can the HSE outline how many GP positions are currently vacant in the area and for how long they have been vacant."

Cllr Declan Burgess

Across South Tipperary 51 GP's currently hold a GMS Contract with the HSE. At present there is **1 GMS vacancy** in Cahir, Co. Tipperary which has been vacant since September 2018 with the practice under the interim management of the HSE. There is a full time locum GP service is available. The HSE continues to actively seek to recruit a new GP to be appointed to the practice and the GMS Vacancy is scheduled to re-advertised in April 2024.

A GP Strategic Review has commenced and will identify the challenges facing General Practice in delivering a sustainable service into the future. The review will set out the actions necessary to address those challenges. It will examine a wide range of issues to do this, including training, capacity, E-Health, the Out of Hours services, and the financial support model necessary to ensure a sustainable service. The HSE is working closely with the Irish College of General Practitioners on a range of measures to expand the GP Workforce including:

- **Increased GP Training Places:** The continued expansion of GP Training is of key strategic importance to the Health Service in order to ensure that there is a sufficient medical workforce capacity in place to meet the needs of an aging population with growing levels of chronic disease. In this regard, training places have increased from an intake of 120 over a decade ago to 285 entering training in July 2023 and planned expansion to 350 in 2024. There will be 30 GP trainees accepted onto the South East Training Scheme in July 2024.
- **Non-EU GP Scheme:** A further initiative developed by the ICGP in collaboration with the HSE involves the establishment of a Non-EU GP Scheme. The intention is to target training places to rural areas and areas of disadvantage where it has been difficult to secure sufficient replacement GPs for retirements and will also target other geographic areas of the country where the number of GPs are less than optimum.

- **Rural Fellowship Scheme:** The Rural Fellowship scheme, which is funded by the HSE, is part of a larger overall plan to address gaps in general practice service in rural areas in Ireland. The fellows will be employed by the ICGP and their work outputs overseen by a steering committee chaired by ICGP.

**Stephanie Lynch,
Acting Chief Officer
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 6(b) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE provided an update on Primary Care unit in Youghal."

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley

Youghal Primary Care Centre is being delivered via the HSE Primary Care Centre Operational Lease Model. Expressions of Interest were sought from the market and a preferred bidder has been identified. Property Review Group and HSE Board approvals are in place. An application for planning permission for Youghal PCC was resubmitted on the 26th of February 2024 (the previous application for planning permission was invalidated for insufficient information regarding site access). Validation of the planning application is awaited and, subject to validation, notification of a decision is due circa 22nd of April.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 6(c) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE outline the reasoning for withdrawing funding for the ADHD Ireland's Understanding and Managing Adult ADHD Programme (UMAAP) in 2024 and when and if they plan on reinstating funding for such a vital services."

Cllr Eileen Lynch

In 2023 ADHD Ireland received once off funding from the HSE to deliver the Understanding and Managing Adult ADHD programme (UMAAP). UMAAP is a 6-week online intervention that combines psychoeducation, with acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) to provide a self-help intervention for adults who have ADHD. The programme was developed by the University College Dublin (UCD) School of Psychology in conjunction with ADHD Ireland and the National Clinical Programme (NCP).

It has been confirmed that following recent discussions between the Department of Health and the HSE to finalise 2024 mental health funding, ADHD Ireland will be receiving recurring funding of €142k this year from National Mental Health Operations in the HSE to cover the proposed annual budget for UMAAP 2024. The HSE funding will allow the full UMAAP 6-week programme plus foundations and practice sessions across 25 rollouts to 1,250 adults with ADHD, and will allow 24 UMAAP specific support groups for 2,400 adults with ADHD in 2024. The funding will also continue to support those individuals who completed the programme in 2023 via the support groups – either by live attendance or via recorded materials being shared. It is proposed to reach 1,250 new individuals with UMAAP in 2024.

There are ongoing efforts to ensure that the programme is enhanced and refined. The current programme is 6 weeks in duration with a 1hr 15min UMAAP foundations session as a prerequisite to joining the 6-week programme. The aim of the foundations is to support programme adherence and to make the transition into the programme smoother and to manage expectations of participants so that they are clear on the format and what is

involved to ensure that they are choosing to engage in the programme at a time that will work best for them.

Approximately 1000 individuals completed UMAAP by the end of 2023. The HSE funding provided for 2024 will support the continued development and high standard of delivery of UMAAP and ensure its sustainability as a support service for Adults with ADHD in Ireland.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 6(d) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE provides an update on the SouthDoc service in Listowel."

Cllr Michael Foley

South West Doctors on Call Limited is an appointment based Out of Hours Family Doctor Service for urgent medical care in Counties Cork and Kerry with its administrative headquarters and call centre in Killarney, Co Kerry. SouthDoc is accredited by NSAI to ISO 9001: 2015 Quality Management System standard.

SouthDoc has a membership of over 500 GPs and a network of Treatment Centres of which seven are overnight and supported by a fleet of vehicles, which are fully equipped for home visit situations. The peninsulas are also supported with a specific model of service provision.

SouthDoc provides a medical service to a population of approximately 736,000 in addition to the 3.3M visitors to the area, and dealt with over 212, 000 patient contacts in 2023 and 40,700 this year.

As a dynamic community based service delivered across the two counties of Cork and Kerry SouthDoc constantly reviews the service provision to ensure its continued viability. There are many factors involved in the delivery of the service not least the capacity / availability of Doctors, Locum Doctors, staff and infrastructure. All these elements are supported by a bespoke Patient Management System as well as a Call Centre where the patient calls are acknowledged, documented and triaged.

Specifically, and in relation to Listowel, a service enhancement plan was implemented in January 2024. The plan was rolled out under the auspices of the Board of Directors, Medical Directors, and Local Doctors. The enhancements include:

- The provision of a dedicated Home Visit division for patients unable to attend a Treatment Centre for their care
- Retention of the Listowel Treatment Centre for patients to be seen by appointment based on clinical needs

- The consolidation of three Doctor teams; Castleisland, Listowel and Tralee resulting in a more sustainable Out of Hours Service to the people of North Kerry
- Direct employment of Doctors to supplement the local GPs in the Out of Hours Service
- The addition of Locum Doctor support at weekends and Public Holidays

The revised model of service is showing positive results. Without the implementation of the above initiatives, it would have ultimately resulted in the continued pressures being experienced in North Kerry, undermining the sustainability of both a viable and secure daytime General Practice and an Out of Hours Service for patients.

Our records show that 64% of patients were treated within 2 hours, a further 21% within three hours, and 94% within four hours. This is entirely in line with the overall service performance and exceeds the requirements of the Service Level Agreement.

SouthDoc continually evaluates the service provision, formally with the HSE and on an ongoing basis internally. As there are numerous stakeholders concerned, any service reviews which would potentially vary the delivery model would involve appropriate advance engagement. Such advance engagement, which has happened in this instance, also ensures the outcome guarantees that patients receive the same standard of care whilst at the same time maximising the utilisation of the clinical personnel available.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

28th March 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 6(e) on Agenda refers:

"In light of the fact that both The District Hospital and St. Colombanus' in Killarney will soon be vacated due to the wonderful new facility currently being developed, that the HSE would outline the plans they have for the buildings"

Cllr John O'Donoghue

These buildings are still in use as residential facilities and are still home to a large number of residents. Once the new Community Nursing Unit, which is currently being delivered nearby through Public Private Partnership, is complete and ready for occupancy, the residents will transfer to the new facility.

HSE Cork Kerry Community Healthcare, as part of the new REO structure, has commenced a review of its current and predicted accommodation needs in the Killarney area. This review will incorporate a population-based service planning approach and plan for the assessed demographic needs of the population over the next 10 – 20 years. The outcome of this review will significantly influence the future use of the current St. Columbanus/Killarney Community Hospital campus.

Mark Kane
Assistant National Director
Capital & Estates Office HSE South

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
May 2024

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(a) on agenda refers:

"That a podiatry clinic run for in patients at Cahersiveen Community Hospital be extended to outpatients from the area to ensure they do not have to travel to Tralee to avail of such a service."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

The podiatry service in Caherciveen Community Hospital is provided by a private therapist who only sees inpatients.

Currently podiatry posts in Community Healthcare Network 3 South Kerry remain vacant. All patients requiring treatment are seen in Rathass, Tralee, based on clinical prioritisation.

These vacancies are as a result of resource deficits due to the present recruitment embargo. Efforts to increase resources throughout and reduce waiting times are indeed our top priority. We are actively working on strategies to address resources allocation, validation of waiting lists, streamlining processes and optimising existing workloads, ultimately working towards providing timely access for all to services.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"That's this Forum writes to CORU – Regulating Health & Social Care Professionals to query the current delays being experienced by physiotherapists who are returning to Ireland to work from the UK in registering."

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

CORU, Ireland's multi profession health and social care regulator, has seen significant increase in application volumes for Physiotherapists over the past 3 years for registration. Please note the below volumes of applications received:

Physiotherapy Recognition Applications Received Worldwide				
Profession	QTR 1 202 4	202 3	202 2	Tot al
*Physiotherapist	181	531	276	988

In light of the above CORU is consistently taking actions which aim to reduce timelines and ensure qualified professionals are registered. Below are examples of such actions:

- Rollout of new Recognition/Registration online system -Q3 2024
- Applicant guidance simplification – ongoing
- Continuous recruitment of qualified assessors for assessment – ongoing
- Recognition/Registration Decision process review – ongoing
- Frequently seen qualifications aligning to the required standards of proficiency for Physiotherapists – this process reduces the timeline of application and documentation requirements for applicants. – ongoing

With the above activities being undertaken, CORU will ensure a reduced timeframe in the recognition/registration of applications overall.

At present CORU have 75 applicants who are currently at the 'missing information' stage of their application who have qualified in the UK/NI. The applicants have been requested to provide the required documentation to enable the CORU administration team to progress their application, but the CORU administration have yet to receive the necessary documentation.

Of the 75 applicants, 36 have applied in 2024. If there are any applicants who are currently waiting in the process of recognition who wish to progress their application, please direct them to either contact us at recognition@coru.ie directly or call us on 012933160 Mon-Fri between 10am and 4pm so we can support them.

If you have specific individuals who are waiting to take up positions within the HSE, can you please let us know who they are so the CORU administration can contact them to ensure progress of their application.

Please note that recognition/registration is a document-based process and requires the applicants to submit the required documentation in the first instance. This includes all academic/post qualifying work experience to be detailed/verified and included with the application. The CORU administration teams need to ensure that all applicants provide as much information as possible to reflect the knowledge and skills they have developed throughout their career to the date of application. This ensures that applicants have a fair and full assessment of their qualifications and the skill set they have developed within the profession potentially outside Ireland.

CORU is continuously developing process models to ensure timely recognition/registration of applicants.

If you require further assistance , please do not hesitate to contact us on communications@coru.ie or oireachtasqueries@coru.ie and we will be happy to help.

Gillian Ryan
Communications Manager
CORU

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE outline the number of children awaiting assessment of needs assessments under the Disability Act 2005 in CHO4 and the current waiting times."

Cllr. Eileen Lynch

The HSE provides quarterly validated reports on Assessment of Need activity. Persons born on or after 1st June 2002 who are suspected of having a disability may apply for an Assessment of Need under the terms of the Disability Act (2005). The data provided in the attached appendix relates to all eligible age groups.

Table 1 below provides quarterly data on applications received in CHO4 in 2023 to date 2024.

<i>Assessment of Need - Applications received</i>								
CHO4	2023				2024			
Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Kerry	28	26	15	24	39			
Cork North	73	96	51	58	85			
Cork North Lee	72	69	119	120	132			
Cork South Lee	68	55	60	70	93			
Cork West	12	15	9	14	22			
Total per quarter	253	261	254	286	371	0	0	0
Total per year				1054				371

Table 1

Table 2 below provides quarterly data on overdue applications in Cork from 2023 to date 2024.

Assessment of Need		Total Overdue for Completion						
CHO4	2023				2024			
Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Kerry	42	43	40	38	32			
Cork North	120	113	141	178	183			
Cork North Lee	377	344	352	345	378			
Cork South Lee	172	181	197	193	161			
Cork West	21	25	24	26	21			
Total per quarter	732	706	754	780	775			

Table 2

Disability Act 2005, Assessment of Need - Stage 1

The Disability Act provides for an initial twelve week period for the Assessment Officer to undertake a desk-top assessment of each application. Thirty three (33) applications are currently overdue at this stage.

Disability Act 2005, Assessment of Need - Stage 2

An Assessment of Need formally commences when the applicant is referred for a clinical assessment. The Act provides for a further twelve week period for this assessment to be completed.

As outlined in Table 2, there are currently 775 Assessments of Need overdue for completion in CHO4. This number is in the context of 1054 applications received for AON in 2023.

Measures being undertaken to address waiting times

Three private service providers (Stepping Ahead, TTM and Servisource) were secured through a tendering process to assist with the delivery of ASD assessments.

One provider that typically provides 48 – 50 assessments per month has agreed to take 200 cases in April/ May. This is to ensure that, in cases where telephone contact with teachers or where observation in the school setting is necessary, this can be achieved before the summer holiday period begins. It is envisaged that this will speed up the return of assessment reports in 2024. We will continue to review progress and if necessary will request a second provider to take extra cases in the autumn. At present two of the three providers cannot take cases over and above figures currently agreed.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"I'm calling on the HSE to provide the BreastCheck Truck to come to Bantry at least once a year if not more."

Cllr Danny Collins

Thank you all for your interest in BreastCheck and specifically the provision of services in West Cork, I hope the information provided here will enable you to continue to advocate for the women of your region.

I would like to begin by outlining how BreastCheck screening operates in Ireland.

We aim to invite women for breast screening every two years. Screening takes place at BreastCheck locations across Ireland, in 4 static units and 24 mobile units which move around the country. The reason we provide services via mobile units is because this approach fulfils our aim to provide breast screening to as many women in Ireland as possible, as equitably as possible, in a location as close to them as possible.

Our mobile units stay at a location for between three months and two years – the duration is determined by how long it takes to invite eligible women living in the area for screening and for those who choose screening to have their appointments. The mobile unit then moves to another location, where the process begins again with eligible women being invited for screening and having their appointments. In this way we work to ensure that no unit is idle for periods of time

A mobile unit was in Bantry between June 2023 and September 2023, it stayed in place until eligible women in the area had been invited for screening and those who chose screening had their appointments. Prior to this, we had a mobile unit in Bantry between July and November 2021, and we anticipate that the mobile unit will be due to be back in Bantry in spring/early summer 2025.

Women who have been unable to take up a previous screening invitation can contact the BreastCheck Southern Unit on 021 464 9700, Monday to Friday between 8am–5pm, and we will aim to find the most suitable place, date and time for them to attend.

Ensuring and improving access to our screening programmes is a central part of our work and a focus of our strategic plan [Choose Screening](#). If you have further specific concerns about the service in West Cork which are not addressed above, or have follow up questions please do let me know by emailing communications@screeningservice.ie.

**Lynne Caffrey,
Senior Communications Officer,
National Screening Service**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"The HSE Civil Registration Service is vital to the community in Cashel and District. Currently due to a recent retirement the service has ceased operation and hasn't been able continue due to the recruitment embargo. Can the HSE advise on the future of this service and what plans they have to return this service to the locality in Cashel."

Cllr Declan Burgess

The HSE, in its operation of the Civil Registration Service, registers all births, deaths and marriages in the Republic of Ireland.

People can book a birth or death registration appointment online for a date and time that they choose at Civil Registration Service offices, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/birth/> and <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/death/>.

The public can purchase a certificate by phone and appointments made online can also be rescheduled/cancelled by users.

HSE/South East Community Healthcare Civil Registration Service offices in Carlow, Clonmel, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford continue to operate as normal.

Currently, due to difficulties in ensuring staffing of the Civil Registration Service and as part of ongoing efforts to maintain those services across the South East, it has been necessary to implement a temporary closure of the Civil Registration office in Cashel, Co. Tipperary.

The HSE/SECH apologises for any inconvenience caused and is working to address the situation with a view towards re-opening as staffing levels allow.

The HSE will honour arrangements already made for a staff member to be present at a particular venue to record a marriage for the Civil Registration Service.

The Civil Registration Service in counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford can be contacted as follows:

- St. Dymphna's Hospital, Carlow (059) 913 6542
- Western Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary (052) 617 7204
- James' Green, Kilkenny (056) 778 4756
- Cork Road, Waterford (051) 842 823
- Ely Hospital, Wexford (053) 919 8260

For information on the registration of:

Births, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/birth/>

Deaths, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/death/>

Weddings, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/marriage/>

Ms Anna Marie Lanigan
Head of Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

"Can we get an update from the National Ambulance Service on plans to extend the number of bases they have in the South Kerry area?"

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Response:

The HSE's National Service Plan for 2024 or Capital Plan 2024 does not make any provision for the expansion of National Ambulance Services in South Kerry in 2024.

**Robert Morton
National Director
National Ambulance Service**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5 (c) on Agenda refers:

"Some children with autism and special needs were cut off from full services during the pandemic. Early intervention is key in these areas. Does the HSE have a plan to address their requirements going forward in terms of assessments and care?"

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Children with complex disability needs access a range of supports through their local Children's Disability Network Team. Some children with complex disability needs also access home support and / or respite services. Children's disability services are provided based on need rather than diagnosis. Some children with autism do not have complex disability needs and receive necessary supports from Primary Care services.

Throughout the pandemic, children's disability services made every effort to continue to provide intervention for children with complex needs via telehealth sessions and resumed face to face sessions as soon as restrictions were eased. Services also resumed assessments as soon as the restrictions allowed.

There is a significant demand for assessments for children with complex disability needs. Many of these children require lengthy diagnostic ASD assessments. In an effort to ensure that Children's Disability Network Teams can provide necessary interventions, we have commissioned a number of private providers to provide diagnostic assessments. The use of private providers means that children can be assessed in a timely manner, and enables services to focus more on therapeutic interventions. Prior to the pandemic, this facility was not in place. Post pandemic this approach was introduced in Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and has been vital in keeping the waiting times for ASD assessments from escalating.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

2nd May 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

“Can the HSE provide an update in relation to when the Millstreet Hospital works will reach completion and be formally opened.”

Cllr Eileen Lynch

Millstreet Community Hospital is a HSE facility registered to provide 24 hour nursing care to both male and female residents aged over 65 years requiring continuing, respite, convalescence and palliative care. In common with many of our community hospitals, extension and refurbishment works have been undertaken at Millstreet Community Hospital to comply with S.I. No. 293/2016 which will facilitate a move away from the ‘open ward’ model to more private rooms, ultimately resulting in enhanced facilities for our current and future residents. Reconfiguration of multi-occupancy bedrooms supports our residents' privacy and dignity and also supports physical distancing of residents in order to minimise the risk of transmission of infection.

The works at Millstreet Community Hospital include construction of a single-storey extension to the existing hospital, consisting of 11 en-suite bedrooms, dining room, kitchen store and changing facilities, new extended day rooms, toilets, assisted bathrooms, administration offices, relocated staff changing, laundry room, plant room, meter room, new link corridor and secure garden courtyards and provision of a landscaped outdoor amenity.

Capital works on the new building are at snag stage and it is hoped Millstreet Community Hospital will be in a position to apply to register this new building with HIQA within the next 4 weeks. Compliance works to the existing building will then commence for a further phase of works. Subject to commissioning, handover and successful completion of HIQA registration, it is anticipated that the extended and refurbished hospital will be fully resourced and operational during Q4, 2024 pending maintenance of adequate staffing levels to deliver optimal care to our residents.

It should be noted that there have been enormous demands on the health service with nursing staff in particular being in demand to match all service requirements. Our priority is to ensure that the maximum number of people that can be safely accommodated in our community hospitals are being accommodated and that our Millstreet Community Hospital residents continue to receive the highest standard of care. Recruitment efforts continue against the background of the current HSE recruitment pause and the significant challenges that recruitment to community hospitals in some of our more rural locations can present.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
September 2024

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

"Can we have full update on the Primary Care Unit in Youghal and how far it has progressed."

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley

Primary Care Community Healthcare Networks are organised and provide services on a population basis as outlined in the "Sláintecare Report" and the "Programme for Government: Our shared future". Ireland has an aging population and it is predicted that there will be a 32% increase in over 65s and 41% increase in over 85s by 2026. There are 96 networks nationwide. There are 14 networks operational across Cork and Kerry and Network 6 covers Midleton and Youghal. I refer to your motion regarding services that will be provided in the new Primary Care Centre in Youghal.

Community Healthcare Network 6 (CHN6), known as East Central Cork Network, has a total population of 45,441 (per 2016 census figures) and consists of 3 geographically based primary care multidisciplinary teams (MDT) that seeks to manage and deliver services locally to provide high-quality person-centred care. The 3 teams serve Midleton North, Midleton South and Youghal/Cloyne.

The community healthcare network:

- Aims to strengthen collaborative multi-disciplinary team working in Primary Care;
- Ensures a more co-ordinated and consistent care for people using our services;
- Improves Integration with our community Services; and
- Manages and delivers local services to a defined population.

The new primary care centre is fundamental to the delivery of service reforms set out in Sláintecare and the roll-out of the new Regional Health Authority's in Network 6, thus is a key priority for the HSE in 2024 and beyond. It will assist in the provision of safe and effective health and social care services in Youghal and will improve our health service and the health and wellbeing of the people living in Youghal by providing the "right care, in the right place, at the right time". It will support service users to live well and feel connected to their community. This

empowerment in turn will assist service users to live independent lives in their own homes in Youghal. The co-location of services will also assist disciplines to provide person centred and optimal care for service users, families and the public in a way that is integrated and coordinated, thus instilling trust and confidence in the organisation.

The services provided by Primary Care include Podiatry, Vision Testing, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Public Health Nursing Services, Area Medical Officer and Dental Services is planned that Youghal Primary Care Centre will have all of the above services available to the people in Youghal. In addition to these services, Children Disability Network Team (CDNT), Home Support Outreach and Mental Health Services and will also be provided in the Primary Care Centre.

The Primary Care Centre in Youghal has been lodged for planning approval and is currently with the local Authority Planning Department for their consideration. Pending the outcome of the planning process, the appropriate next step will be enacted with respect to progressing same.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"Do the HSE have any further plans to develop Primary Care Centres in Tralee and what is the current update for the delivery of a Minor Injuries Unit for Kerry."

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE would seek to set up Minor Injury Clinics throughout the county of Kerry, this would in turn relieve the pressure that is currently on our A&E unit in UHK."

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

Motion 4(h) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE would locate a minor injuries clinic in Killarney."

Cllr Marie Moloney

Response on Minor Injury Units:

"The plan for the development of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) for the Kerry County Region is progressing and aligned to the HSE Capital Plan 2024. The chosen location of the MIU is Killarney."

Dr Gerard O'Callaghan
Chief Operations Officer
South/South West Hospital Group

Response on Primary Care Centres, Tralee:

The HSE currently provides primary care services from both the Centre Point building in Tralee as well as the PCCC building on the UHK campus. The HSE are currently examining best options for the provision of primary care services in Tralee.

Ms Tess O'Donovan
Chief Officer
Cork Kerry Community Health Care

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"Could the HSE clearly outline status and timelines for development of site at Kelvin Grove Athy Road Carlow?"

Cllr Fergal Browne

HSE Capital and Estates advise that the proposed plan for the development of the Kelvin Grove site includes a number of new facilities as follows:

- Relocation of Holy Angels Pre-School and Children's Disability Network Team
- New Ambulance Base including the refurbishment of existing Kelvin Grove House for the National Ambulance Service.

HSE Estates in conjunction with a number of services are reviewing options within the current development control plan for the remainder of the Kelvin Grove site.

Holy Angels Pre School and Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT)

HSE Estates can confirm a design team was appointed in 2023 for the proposed Holy Angels Pre School and CDNT project. The design team prepared a cost report which indicated the funding required was significantly in excess of the allocated €7.1m.

To progress with the more-urgent Holy Angels Pre School, the HSE is currently reviewing options to prioritise this development on the Kelvin Grove site. The design team is liaising with the Service and preparing option appraisals. This should be completed circa October 2024. It is anticipated that funding will be provided to enable the Holy Angels project proceed to the next stage.

The CDNT remains co-located in Bethany House and the recently refurbished Bluebell Centre at St Dymphna's Hospital Campus.

National Ambulance Service

HSE Estates working with the National Ambulance Service is in the process of engaging a design team for the development of a new Ambulance Base on the site. It is anticipated that the design team should be appointed in October 2024.

Following the above appointments, which should be in place in the next few months, the project programmes and target dates will be agreed with the Service and circulated.

**Michelle Doyle,
A/Chief Officer,
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"To ask the HSE to give an update on the 97 bed extension for Wexford General Hospital and whether it has any further capital development works planned for Wexford General Hospital"

Cllr Cathal Byrne

Somerton Wing (97 Bed Ward Block) & Multistorey Car Park

It is envisaged that works will commence on the Multistorey Car Park at WGH in Q4 2024. It is envisaged that the Car Park and other enabling works required in advance of the 97 Bed Ward Block will be completed by Q4 2025.

Work on the Somerton Wing will then commence. It is estimated that these works will take 24-30 months to complete and it is hoped that the building will be handed over to the hospital in Q1, 2028. The Somerton Wing will have 97 single rooms all ensuite.

- A design team has been appointed.
- The Design Team has been concentrating on the multi storey car park, however they continue to progress the Somerton Wing; design and workshops have been held with key stakeholders within the hospital.
- The General Arrangement has been frozen. Civil & Structural and M&E design is well advanced.
- Detailed Design progressing at pace.

There are numerous other Capital Projects ongoing and planned on the Wexford General Hospital Campus and Ely Hospital Campus. These include:

- Temporary Modular MRI completed in June '24
- Permanent MRI Unit – to proceed to tender September '24
- Upgrade to the Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) – due to be completed End September 2024.
- Pilot site for Pathfinder Sustainability Project - Design Stage
- Medical Trunking / Medical Gases and Associated works following the fire at the hospital in March 2023 ongoing, to be completed Q2 '25.
- Design Team Consultants appointed for the Old Hospital – dereliction notice received from Wexford County Council. Surveys being undertaken.
- Upgrades in Ely Hospital (Endoscopy Unit & Minor Procedures Room)
Phase 1 - Complete

- 2 No. Endoscopy suites and Decontamination suite. At equipping and commissioning stage.
- Phase 2 - works in progress to provide a new Minor Procedures Room, due for handover end of September.
 - Phase 3 - works involve conversion of chapel & meeting room and offices and bathroom downstairs to office accommodation. Refurbish the OPD suite and Re slate the leaking roof on the convent wing

Linda O'Leary
General Manager
Wexford General Hospital

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"That this forum supports the need to regularise and equalise pay and pension conditions for all workers operating in the CDNT ecosystem with their counterparts in primary care to ensure equal parity in pay and pension rights to support recruitment and retention and will write to the Taoiseach and All ministers of the Government on this matter."

Cllr. Peter Horgan

Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs):

A Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) is a team of health and social care professionals who provide services for children with complex disability needs within a defined geographic area.

There are 14 CDNTs within Cork Kerry Community Healthcare, the location of each aligning with the Community Healthcare Networks. Each CDNT is managed by a Lead Agency, namely Brothers of Charity (Section 38) CoAction (Section 39), COPE Foundation (Section 38), Enable Ireland (Section 39) and St Joseph's Foundation (Section 39).

Section 38 and Section 39 Organisations:

The Health Act 2004 provides that the HSE may, subject to conditions, fund the services provided by non-statutory agencies.

Under the Health Act 2004, Section 38 arrangements involve organisations that are funded to provide a defined level of service on behalf of the HSE, while under Section 39 the HSE grant-aids a wide range of organisations to a greater or lesser extent.

The employees of agencies that are funded under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004 are considered public servants. They are subject to the standard salary scales for the health sector as well as, in the main, having access to a public service pension scheme. The employees are included in public service employment numbers (including CKCH employment numbers).

The employees of agencies that receive grant-aid from the HSE under Section 39 are not public servants and are not specifically subject to the pay-scales approved for public servants. They are not included in public service employment numbers.

Of the CDNT lead agencies, Cope Foundation and Brothers of Charity are Section 38 organisations and have a total of 181.59 WTEs approved for CDNT services (total 2,097 WTE across all of their services). CoAction, Enable Ireland and Saint Joseph's Foundation are Section 39 organisations with a total of 172.99 WTEs approved for CDNT services (total 746 WTE across all services).

In 2023, Government and Section 39 organisations agreed at the Workplace Relations Commission to a pay restoration deal including an 8% pay increase and a commitment to work towards a restoration of parity with public sector workers doing similar work. HSE is providing funding to Section 39 organisations to implement the pay increase.

Any decision to provide public sector terms and conditions of employment for staff in Section 39 organisations is a matter for Government.

Additional Information:

The CDNT service model is based on a partnership between families and team members which focuses on a child's strengths, capacity and skills. The teams help families develop confidence to support their child's needs at home, at school and in their community. They work in partnership with educators to gain a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the child and their family.

There are three types of evidence-informed support provided for children and families. As each child is unique, our teams work with them and their families to offer the best supports for their needs:

- Universal supports usually delivered through information sessions, talks and workshops for families on topics such as sleep, toilet training and communications.
- Targeted Supports delivered by bringing families with common and shared challenges together. Examples with good outcomes include, "It Takes Two to Talk" (relevant for children with language delay), "More than Words" and "Talkability" (relevant for children with autism or social communication disorder).
- Individual Supports: address a child or family's specific individual needs. For example, this can be the child's movement difficulties, feeding or communication difficulties.

The CDNTs in CKCH have a combined active caseload of 7,629 children (an increase of 14% since May 2023). An average of 41% of the caseload are offered an appointment each month with an average attendance rate of 88%. There were 698 children on the waitlist in July 2024 (decreased from 898 in January 2024). The percentage waiting 0-3 months has increased from 7% in May 2023 to 23% in July 2024, meaning a smaller proportion of children on the waitlist are waiting more than 3 months. The percentage waiting for over 12 months has reduced from 70% in May 2023 to 40% in July 2024.

CDNT Staffing Levels:

Recruitment for Children's Disability Network Teams is ongoing by the lead agencies who hold their own recruitment process for all of their vacancies. As per Table 1, there is currently a vacancy rate of 26% (16% vacant posts plus 10% maternity leave, parental leave, sick leave, career break etc.). This impacts negatively on service delivery. Every effort is being made to recruit staff to these vacant posts including recruitment abroad initiatives.

Table 2: CDNT Vacancies

CDNT Code	CDNT Area	Lead Agency	Agency Type	Approved WTEs	Filled WTEs	%	Vacant WTEs	%	Other Unfilled WTEs *	%
CDNT 01	North Kerry	BOC	Sec. 38	21.50	17.40	81%	3.00	14%	1.10	5%
CDNT 02	West Kerry	Enable	Sec. 39	19.09	11.53	60%	4.80	25%	2.76	14%
CDNT 03	South Kerry	BOC	Sec. 38	31.46	24.86	79%	2.00	6%	4.60	15%
CDNT 04	North West Cork	SJF	Sec. 39	31.28	26.45	85%	3.63	12%	1.20	4%
CDNT 05	North East Cork	SJF	Sec. 39	16.40	12.00	73%	2.00	12%	2.40	15%
CDNT 06	East Central Cork	Cope	Sec. 38	19.28	16.88	88%	2.20	11%	0.20	1%
CDNT 07	East Cork City	BOC	Sec. 38	25.87	19.77	76%	0.90	3%	5.20	20%
CDNT 08	Central Cork	Cope	Sec. 38	33.70	20.80	62%	9.10	27%	3.80	11%
CDNT 09	North Cork City & Blarney	Cope	Sec. 38	20.65	14.48	70%	5.00	24%	1.17	6%
CDNT 10	West Cork	Co-Action	Sec. 39	28.91	24.09	83%	1.90	7%	2.92	10%
CDNT 11	South East Cork City	Enable	Sec. 39	29.44	20.54	70%	5.80	20%	3.10	11%
CDNT 12	West Central Cork	Enable	Sec. 39	31.24	19.64	63%	9.00	29%	2.60	8%
CDNT 13	Bandon / Carrigaline / Kinsale	BOC	Sec. 38	29.13	20.55	71%	5.18	18%	3.40	12%
CDNT 14	South Cork City	Enable	Sec. 39	16.63	13.13	79%	3.50	21%	0	0%
TOTALS				354.58	262.12	74%	58.01	16%	34.45	10%

* Includes Mat Leave, P/L, S/L, Career Breaks, etc.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

"When it comes to securing housing for people with Intellectual Disabilities the current policy/protocol by the HSE inhibits houses being made available for this purpose as it insists that no members of a family that wish to provide a house for multiple occupancy are to be allowed to continue to live there. This has resulted in the loss of two such homes in Kerry alone in the last year for a sector that desperately needs this accommodation. My question/motion is why allow an overly stringent protocol to continue when surely a case by case examination of what is feasible could result in more units being made available?"

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Disability Services provide residential places for adults in HSE operated services and services funded under Section 38 and 39 of the Health Act. Each Section 38 and Section 39 not for profit service provider in Cork and Kerry receives funding on an annual basis to deliver an agreed quantum of service including an agreed number of residential placements.

In order to ensure equity of access to, and provision of funded residential placements, CKCH Disability Services established a Residential Forum. The Residential Forum is chaired by CKCH Disability Services and the membership comprises CKCH Disability Services and the not for profit service providers funded to provide residential placements in Cork and Kerry.

The purpose of the Residential Forum is to ensure that existing and emerging residential vacancies are identified and that referrals to the available places are made on the basis of assessed need. All requests for a residential placement are recorded and managed through the Residential Forum and cases are referred to the Forum for assessment of suitability. A system called the Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSAMT) is used which serves to ensure that the application process is equitable and transparent.

It is regrettable that the demand for residential placements in Cork and Kerry exceeds the availability of placements. Funding to develop new services in Cork and

Kerry has not been allocated and, as a result, we have not had capacity to expand the number of residential placements in the area. CKCH recognises the impact this has on people and their families. Should additional funding be allocated, CKCH Disability Services will work to expand the number of residential placements in Cork and Kerry.

Decision making on allocation of any residential vacancies is informed by the prioritisation of assessed clinical needs, the complexity of cases, and the support needs of applicants, as well as the existing residents and the funding available. With this position in mind it is not always possible to map a definitive timeframe for allocation of a placement to a particular individual at any given time. There are approximately 600 people awaiting/requiring residential services in Cork and Kerry at present.

Unfortunately, Disability Services within Cork and Kerry continues to operate in the context of very challenging circumstances; including limited availability of resources such as personnel, therapists, facilities and available accommodation for residential placements in appropriate settings.

CKCH Disability Services welcomes all investment in these vital services and continues to endeavour to identify innovative solutions to meet people's needs while ensuring access is based on equity and transparency.

Housing Query

There is no HSE policy that inhibits the provision of housing for providing residential places. In such circumstances, each case is explored extensively with the relevant person and/or family. While CKCH Disability Services cannot comment on individual cases some barriers identified to progressing include:

- requests which are not possible for the HSE to implement as they pose a legal or financial risk for the HSE and the State
- requests for specific persons to receive residential placements which does not adhere to the allocation framework
- location of properties which would impede the necessary staffing of a service and access to emergency services if required
- cost of property refurbishment required to meet the legal requirements for registering as a residential service under the Health Act Regulations

It is important to note that it is incumbent on the HSE to ensure that all publicly provided funding is allocated with due consideration to ensuring value for money and equity of allocation to meet the greatest need within a finite budget allocation in addition to adhering to all legal requirements. CKCH Disability Services welcome any additional funding to expand the number of residential placements and will continue to explore all available options.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(i) on Agenda refers:

"That in view of the well proven harmful effects of vaping, especially to young people, this Forum would call on the Minister for Health to bring in further measures to restrict their widespread use among non-smokers, especially in terms of marketing and availability."

Cllr John Sheehan

Announcement by the Minister for Health in early September is important and included the following in relation to Vaping in Ireland:

- Legislation being drafted to restrict use of nicotine inhaling products
- Ban on sale, manufacture or import of single-use or disposable vapes in Ireland
- Limit the vape flavours – informed by evidence
- Ban on point of display or advertising of vape products in shops other than those who primarily use these products
- Done on public health and environmental grounds

Dr Anne Sheahan
Area Director of Public Health
Department of Public Health - HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"Following the cessation of services, what plans do the HSE have regarding the replacement of the registrar and continuation of registry office services in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford"

Cllr Damien Geoghegan

The HSE, in its operation of the Civil Registration Service, registers all births, deaths and marriages in the Republic of Ireland.

Currently, due to difficulties in ensuring staffing of the Civil Registration Service and as part of ongoing efforts to maintain those services across the South East, it has been necessary to implement a temporary closure of the Civil Registration office in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford and reduce service levels to 3 days per week in Waterford City by appointment only.

However, every effort continues to be made to maintain services in order to cover the wider geographical requirements across the entire South East.

HSE South East Community Healthcare's Civil Registration Service offices in the towns of Carlow, Kilkenny, Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary and Wexford continue to operate as normal.

Marriage Ceremonies previously confirmed for both Waterford City and Dungarvan will continue to be honoured by the HSE.

The Civil Registration Service in counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford can be contacted as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| • St. Dymphna's Hospital, Carlow | (059) 913 6542 |
| • Western Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary | (052) 617 7204 |
| • James' Green, Kilkenny | (056) 778 4756 |
| • Cork Road, Waterford | (051) 842 823 |
| • Ely Hospital, Wexford | (053) 919 8260 |

People can book a birth or death registration appointment online for a date and time that they choose at Civil Registration Service offices, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/birth/> and <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/death/>.

The public can purchase a certificate by phone and appointments made online can also be rescheduled/cancelled by users.

For information on the registration of:

- Births, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/birth/>
- Deaths, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/death/>
- Weddings, see <https://www2.hse.ie/services/births-deaths-and-marriages/register/marriage/>

The HSE apologises for any inconvenience caused and is working to address the situation with a view towards reopening as staffing levels allow.

**Michelle Doyle,
A/Chief Officer,
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

"Will this Forum support my call to make the shingles vaccine available to all persons in older age brackets. The monetary cost of this vaccine is prohibitive in Ireland in comparison to other countries."

Cllr. Mikey Sheehy

The immunisation programme in Ireland is based on the advice of the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC). NIAC continue to revise its recommendations having regard to of the prevalence of the relevant disease in Ireland and international best practice in relation to immunisation. The varicella vaccine is not currently included as part of the adult immunisation programme. There are Herpes zoster vaccines are licensed for those aged 50 years or older to reduce the risk of developing zoster and postherpetic neuralgia. However, they are not part of the schedule and must be purchased if required.

Dr Anne Sheahan
Area Director of Public Health
Department of Public Health - HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on Agenda refers:

"To ask the HSE to provide the number of persons over 16 and under 16 on waiting lists for speech and language therapy in County Wexford and the numbers waiting more than 12, 26, 52 and 104 weeks respectively."

Cllr. Cathal Byrne

Primary Care Services

The numbers awaiting assessment and therapy for the Speech and Language Therapy Service in Co. Wexford are presented below. In line with the current waiting list registers, data is included for those waiting 16, 32, 52 and 104 weeks.

Primary Care Children's Services Wexford

Children requiring interventions including health and therapy services access services through Primary Care Teams in CHO Areas as well as through Children's Disability Services. Service delivery whether CDNT or PCT is always based on the assessed needs of the child at a given time.

Primary Care Children's Services Wexford

Children (0 to 17.11 years)	4-8 months >16 weeks	8-12 months >32	1 year >52 weeks	2 years >104 weeks
Waiting Assessment	203	242	432	0
Waiting Therapy	39	58	80	14
Total	242	300	512	14

Primary Care Adult's Services Wexford

Adults (over 18 years)	4-8 months >16 weeks	8-12 months >32	1 year >52 weeks	2 years >104 weeks
Waiting Assessment	46	0	22	0
Waiting Therapy	0	0	0	0
Total	46	0	22	0

SLT Waiting List Initiatives

SECH Primary Care is focused on improving access to care in order to reduce waiting times for patients. This includes monitoring the waiting list on an on-going basis in the context of available resources. The Wexford SLT department continually validates waiting lists (children and adults) to ensure they are current with priority given to those requiring urgent appointments. In addition there is ongoing work to reduce non-attendance at appointments. This includes a reminder texting service to people attending the SLT service.

SHARE Project

The Wexford SLT department piloted the SHARE project in 2023. The aim of the SHARE project, is to reduce waiting times and increase accessibility to services for parents who want the right advice, support and strategies at the right time for them. The SHARE APP by Kids Speech Labs was introduced as a secure platform to share recorded SLT information, education and training sessions for parents. Initially the pilot targeted children between the ages of 2 years and 2:11 years with language delay.

The provision of these sessions through the APP has allowed the SLT department to prioritise children with significant needs requiring one to one intervention. In 2024 the project was expanded to include 3 to 3:11 year olds with language delay from initial assessment resulting in reduction of children waiting initial therapy. By May 2024, 146 offered intervention through the SHARE APP.

HAPPY TALK National Research Project

Wexford SLT Department was successful in its bid to be part of the national research project for the HAPPY TALK parent child speech and language programme. As one of the four research sites nationally Wexford has identified 10 sites (6 preschools and 4 schools) to be part of the project commencing in September 2024. This intervention aims to address the speech and language difficulties linked with social disadvantage through education and training.

Stuttering Sessions

The evening stuttering sessions commenced in 2023 and support adolescents with communication challenges become advocates for themselves, meet others with similar needs in a place and at a time that is worked around the busy teenage life. These sessions provided by SLT in Enniscorthy for all secondary school students who stutter.

The Wexford SLT service provide a **Parkinson's Group** and communication training for businesses, 'ÉIST' look beyond the disorder, to the person and their environment. Supporting people to communicate in their daily lives in their own communities reduces re referral rates and develops a culture of caring and communication awareness.

Disability Services

Following reconfiguration of children's services under the national framework for progressing services for children and young people; The Children's Disability Network Team captures those awaiting Individual family service plans (IFSP's) and not discipline specific waiting lists e.g. Speech and Language Therapy/ Occupational Therapy / Physiotherapy and Psychology as this individual discipline model is no longer in keeping with the Model of Service delivery to be provided through

Progressing Disability Services. County Wexford has four Childrens Disability Network Teams (CDNTs).

If a child is identified to have Speech & Language Therapy needs at the point of referral or while engaging with CDNT services the Speech and Language Therapists on the CDNT meet and review all information available and then prioritise the child into three categories i.e. Priority 1, Priority 2 or Priority 3 category. For Priority 1 categories, those children would receive their service input as soon as possible, depending on the risk and need presenting this could happen within days. For those children that are at a lower priority rating may have a longer waiting period. It is difficult to give general information on wait times for SLT as it is based on each individual child and needs and risk present.

CDNT Services Wexford

CDNT	CDNT Open Caseload	CDNT No. on Open Caseload awaiting SLT
Network 8 New Ross	208	208*
Network 9 Gorey	205	42
Network 10 Wexford	253	213
Network 11 Enniscorthy	313	155

Note* No SLT working on the CDNT New Ross currently - all children on the open case load have been included for SLT input on some level.

SECH Disability Services is focused on improving access to services and care for children. In addition Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) / SLT within available resources provide communications courses and *workshops for parents* for children with *communication difficulties*. These may include Let's Get Talking intervention and the 'Early Social Communication & Language' Intervention.

Currently in Wexford there are a number of universal supports for families linked with CDNT's in Wexford that are supported by Speech and Language Therapists on the CDNT's.

Communikids:

The CommuniKids Training is designed for parents and guardians of children who have communication difficulties. The training involves four parent information sessions which is delivered by two speech and language therapists (SLTs). An individual session with the child and a Speech and Language Therapist is offered after each parent information session to help them to use the strategies with their child.

Total Communication:

A support for families that explores communication.

Early Bird:

Early Bird is a post-diagnostic support offered to parents and children following a child being identified as autistic. It consists of parents attending a weekly group session with some home visits offered also.

An adult with Physical or Sensory Disabilities receives Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) from Primary Care. There is a specialist SLT for Adults with Intellectual Disability.

CAMHS

The CAMHS SLT waiting list for North Wexford currently is 8 young people under the age of 16 and waiting less than 12 weeks. The Wexford South CAMHS do not currently have a SLT attached to the team.

Staffing and Recruitment

As with other areas there are ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades in all areas of the health services including Primary Care, Disability and Mental Health Services. The HSE is operating in a very competitive market as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals nationally and internationally. Disability Services / SECH continues to prioritise local competitions for all disciplines and continues to express posts out to current national panels where relevant. There is a current live campaign for senior clinical posts for the SECH including Speech and Language therapists.

The HSE acknowledges that waiting times for services at this time are stressful for children and their families and will continue to pursue options with the aim of improving access to SLT services to all eligible service users.

**Michelle Doyle,
A/Chief Officer,
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

“How many people are waiting for cataract operations in the SSWHG, please give a breakdown as to how long these people have been waiting and give an age profile of the patients.”

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

In line with the recommendations contained in *The National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology Model of Eye Care (2017)*, and the Reconfiguration of Acute Hospital Services for Cork and Kerry, it was decided that there should be a regional department of Ophthalmology. The South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital was chosen as the site best suited for this.

Three Ophthalmology pathways have been approved, to date; each to be delivered utilising community-based Integrated Eye Care Teams. The approved pathways for 2023 are the Cataract Pathway, the Medical Retina Pathway and the Paediatric Eye Pathway, which together will enable the realisation of significant components of the National Model of Care for Ophthalmology. These pathways have been prioritised for immediate commencement.

The following is the latest breakdown of the number of people waiting for cataract operations in the South / South West Hospital Group by age profile.

Cataract (No TCI) Public IPDC WL

Age Profile	0-3 Mths	3-6 Mths	6-9 Mths	9-12 Mths	Grand Total
	184	71	20	10	285
0 - 60 years	9	10	5	1	25
61 – 70 years	47	14	6	4	71
71 – 80 years	88	32	5	4	129
81 – 90 years	38	14	4	1	57
> 90 years	2	1	0	0	3

Source: NTPF IPDC WL Analysis Report 11.09.2024

Helen Donovan
Chief Executive Officer
South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(e) on Agenda refers:

"The amount paid to consultancy houses for the provision of services within each individual hospital and hospital group under the remit of this forum, in the years 2022, 2023, 2024 year to date, in tabular form, detailed by the type of service provided."

Cllr Peter Horgan

The below table sets out the expenditure incurred in relation to consultancy costs for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 year to date, by Hospital.

<u>University Hospital Kerry</u>			
Category	2022	2023	2024 ytd
Project Management	€19,996	€76,449	€6,396
<u>Cork University Hospital</u>			
Category	2022	2023	2024 ytd
Project Management	€213,044	€2,266,845	€1,195,668
Managed Service Executive Portfolio	€302,846	€1,135,877	€500,772
Managed Service -Directorate Support	€92,362	€370,065	€32,552
National Programmes	Nil	€661,632	€347,924
<u>South Infirmary Victoria Hospital</u>			
Category	2022	2023	2024 ytd
Project Management	€45,941	€48,278	€74,077
<u>Mercy University Hospital</u>			
Category	2022	2023	2024 ytd
Project Management	€160,796	€150,512	€106,457

**Dr Gerard O'Callaghan,
Chief Operations Officer
South/South West Hospital Group**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(f) on Agenda refers:

"To ask when the charge for getting bloods tested by local GPs was first introduced for medical card holders and if this can be waived in the case of patients recovering from cancer."

Cllr Fergal Browne

In line with the GMS Contract, Medical Practitioners shall provide eligible patients with "all proper and necessary treatment of a kind usually undertaken by a general practitioner and not requiring special skill or experience of a degree or kind which general practitioners cannot reasonably be expected to possess". Routine blood tests, which are deemed clinically necessary by the patient's GP are within the scope of service. The long-standing position of the Department of Health and the HSE has been that routine blood tests in primary care are covered under this element of the GMS Contract. Separately the Acute Hospital system also provides for phlebotomy services for patients who have been referred by GPs or through Emergency Departments.

The issue of GPs charging GMS patients for phlebotomy services (blood tests) is complex given the numerous reasons and circumstances under which blood tests are taken. Clinical determinations as to whether a blood test should be taken to either assist in the diagnosis of illness or the treatment of a condition are made by the GP concerned. There is no provision under the GMS GP contract for persons who hold a medical card or GP visit card to be charged for such blood tests.

In addition, blood tests undertaken in the context of services provided under the GP Chronic Disease Management Programme are covered by the fees paid to GPs by the HSE for this care.

The issue of certain GPs charging GMS patients for necessary blood tests has been raised with the relevant GP representative body on a number of occasions. However, it has not yet proven possible to achieve agreement that no charges for blood tests would be applied in any circumstances.

Where a patient who holds a medical card or GP visit card believes they have been incorrectly charged for routine phlebotomy services or for a different service by their GP, then that patient should report the matter to their HSE Local Health Office. The local management, upon being notified of potential inappropriate charging of a GMS

patient, will contact the GP concerned and carry out an investigation into each complaint and, where appropriate, will arrange for a refund of charges incorrectly applied by the GP.

**Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme & Primary Care Contracts**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(g) on Agenda refers:

"How many people who have been approved for Home Care in the South East and are still waiting on the service? How long are applicants currently waiting to have the service in place from when it was approved?"

Cllr Pat Dunphy

The HSE Home Support Service (formerly called the Home Help Service or Home Care Package Scheme) aims to support older people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible and to support informal carers.

Home support is a non-statutory service and access to the current service is based on assessment of the person's needs by the HSE, having regard to the available resources and competing demands for the service. Home Support Services for Older People are provided either by directly employed staff or by voluntary and private providers who have formal tender arrangements with the HSE to deliver the services.

Demand for home support continues to increase due to population growth and the increasing dependency of the growing numbers of people aged over 65 years, and is especially evident in the over 80 cohort. In the context of increasing demand, priority is given to those being discharged from acute hospitals who are in a position to return home with supports and to those in the community with acute needs. Funding approval is expedited across the system to ensure minimum waiting times.

Home Support Activity

The Home Support hours delivered from January to July 2024 for South East Community Healthcare (CHO5) is ahead of as follows:

Table 1: Home Support Hours delivered SECH Jan-July 2024

Area	Total Home Support hours	Hours delivered by HSE Staff	Hours delivered by Private Provider staff
Carlow/Kilkenny	290,116	220,409	69,707
South Tipperary	211,406	194,814	16,592
Waterford	251,058	178,744	72,314
Wexford	400,526	216,963	189,563
Total	1,159,106	810,930	348,176

The total number of clients in receipt of a Home Support service as of the 31st July 2024 is outlined in the table below.

Table 2: Number of Clients in receipt Home Support Services July 2024

Area	Number of Clients
Carlow/Kilkenny	1,453
South Tipperary	1,243
Wexford	1,757
Waterford	1,214
Total	5,667

The number of individuals currently on the waiting list for Home Support services is outlined in Table 3 below. This waiting list is inclusive of individuals awaiting a new Home Support service plus individuals awaiting an increase in their current Home Support service. The length of time awaiting a service is not routinely collated.

Table 3: Number* Awaiting Home Support Service SECH 2024

Area	Numbers Approved and Awaiting Service
Carlow/Kilkenny	144
South Tipperary	94
Waterford	279
Wexford	225
Total	742

Note: Number Waiting = persons awaiting new Home Support service **and those in receipt of Home Support Service awaiting additional hours*

Support Staffing and Challenges

The Home Support Service operates within the constraints of available staffing resources which impacts directly on the ability for a service to be delivered either partially or in its entirety. There are significant challenges in sourcing home support staff at present with areas experiencing increasing demand due to recruitment and retention challenges. In addition the HSE tendered Service Providers are also finding it extremely difficult to recruit Health Care Assistants (Home Support) and as a result may not have capacity to take on additional clients who are approved for Home Support Service.

The recruitment of Health Care Assistants within the overall South East Community Healthcare Older Persons WTE ceiling complement is a priority with a further 4 staff commencing in post on 2nd September 2024.

Home Support staff are assigned to geographical areas with a Primary Care Centre base. There may be variations in waiting time as some areas particularly rural areas may have greater staffing challenges. The wait time may also be compounded by increasing number of requests for evening and weekend services which are more difficult to fill than morning or lunch time calls.

There are also new workforce requirements with increasing number of more complex cases presenting requiring two staff to attend to one person and also greater hours to be allocated to meet presenting need.

Home Support Improvement Programme

A National Programme (Reform of Home Support Services and establishment of Statutory Home Support Scheme Programme) is underway and is a high priority for 2024 and 2025.

The focus is on a regulatory framework (with HIQA as independent regulator) for providers of home support services through the introduction of new primary legislation and a regulatory environment/licensing system. This will ensure that home support services are of consistently high quality and safeguard service users.

The HSE is currently designing a new home support service delivery operating model which will enable the organisation to standardise service delivery across the health regions and to assure system readiness with future Home Support regulations for the providers of home support.

**Michelle Doyle,
A/Chief Officer,
South East Community Healthcare**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(h) on Agenda refers:

"Can we please have an update on when the Clinical Nurse Specialist / Crisis Intervention Nurse Post for SK will be filled. This is an urgent situation and it is a key position that needs to be filled asap."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

During the HSE recruitment pause graduate nurse recruitment campaigns were progressed under memo 006/24. Since the recruitment pause was lifted on 15th July 2024, the HSE has been reviewing our positions under the Pay and Numbers Strategy 2024 and has sought to progress recruitment when possible for all grades and disciplines of staff. CKCH Mental Health Services are required to operate within our WTE and budget limits, we will advise as soon as possible what posts can be prioritised under their review.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(i) on Agenda refers:

"What is the up-to-date position with regard to the provision of a Primary Care Centre in Killarney"

Cllr Marie Moloney

Primary Care Community Healthcare Networks are organised and provide services on a population basis as outlined in the "Slaintecare Report" and the "Programme for Government: Our shared future". Ireland has an aging population and it is predicted that there will be a 32% increase in over 65s and 41% increase in over 85s by 2026. There are 96 networks nationwide. There are 14 networks operational across Cork and Kerry and Network 3 cover Kenmare and Killarney. I refer to your motion regarding services that will be provided in the new Primary Care Centre in Killarney.

The community healthcare network:

- Aims to strengthen collaborative multi-disciplinary team working in Primary Care;
- Ensures a more co-ordinated and consistent care for people using our services;
- Improves Integration with our community Services; and
- Manages and delivers local services to a defined population.

The new primary care centre is fundamental to the delivery of service reforms set out in "Slainte Care" and the roll-out of the new Regional Health Authority's in Network 3, thus is a key priority for the HSE in 2024 and beyond. It will assist in the provision of safe and effective health and social care services in Killarney and will improve our health service and the health and wellbeing of the people living in Killarney by providing the "right care, in the right place, at the right time". It will support service users to live well and feel connected to their community. This empowerment in turn will assist service users to live independent lives in their own homes in Killarney. The co-location of services will also assist disciplines to provide person centred and optimal care for service users, families and the public in a way that is integrated and coordinated, thus instilling trust and confidence in the organisation.

A Capital Submission has been made for the provision of an Interim Primary Care facility in Killarney. The said submission has been approved subject to funding and priority.

The HSE have been in discussions with Kerry County Council regarding the delivery of a Primary Care Centre on a local authority site as part of a regeneration project in Killarney. Kerry County Council have appointed a Design Team who are engaging with HSE regarding HSE requirements for the potential project.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

19th September 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(j) on Agenda refers:

“That the HSE would provide an update in relation to the proposed badly needed new Primary Care Centre for the Blarney Area.”

Cllr John Sheehan

The HSE were engaged with a Developer for this proposed Primary Care Centre and Cork County Council had granted planning permission for the proposed centre. The planning decision was appealed to An Bord Pleanála, who upheld the planning decision. However, this decision was then appealed to the High Court. An Bord Pleanála decided not to issue a defence at the High Court with the result that the Planning Permission was void, which resulted in a significant setback for the proposed project and the requirement to re-tendered.

I wish to confirm that these tenders have just been received back and are due to be evaluated shortly.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
November 2024

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE please advise if a new permanent building is in plans for the ambulance service in Midleton, to include but not limited to staff quarters, offices and secure locked dispensing units as they are currently working out of portacabins"

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern

The General Manager NAS South West and the General Manager NAS Estates met with HSE Estates on Friday 25th October to review and discuss progress development of a new NAS Station in Midleton. The Estates Office are still reviewing potential sites outside of the flood risk areas. Once suitable sites are identified, a full capital submission will be made to the National Capital and Property Steering Group for approval to proceed with a Capital Project to replace the current infrastructure.

Rob Moriarty
National Ambulance Service

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"In order to achieve safe staffing levels as needed by frontline workers, to detail the amount of vacancies, including all current sick leave absences, maternity leave, career break and all other leave categories in Cork University Hospital. The full cost of filling all those vacancies, apart from sick leave, to ensure safe staffing levels."

Cllr. Peter Horgan

In response to your motion, I can confirm that as per the recent HSE Pay and Numbers Strategy the current vacancies in Cork University Hospital are 37.26 WTE.

The following sets out the figures for staff leave in Cork University Hospital for September, 2024:

- Number of staff on sick leave inclusive of maternity leave – paid and unpaid – 300.
- Number of staff on parental / parents leave – unpaid – 553 (headcount).
- Number of staff on career break – unpaid – 109 (headcount).

Further workforce information is available on the HSE website: <https://www.hse.ie>.

Management make arrangements to fill vacancies to ensure an appropriate level of staffing through: reassignment of existing personnel as the service demands allow, through the use of overtime and /or locum cover when same may be available. Cork University Hospital are recruiting staff on an on-going basis where required.

In relation to the cost of filling vacancies, the Hospital currently does not have a system for reporting this information, therefore, as a result of the time required to compile this information it will not be possible to provide within the timescale and parameters allocated.

Deirdre O'Keeffe
A/Chief Executive Officer
Cork University Hospital Group

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

“Can the HSE give the people of Waterford and the South East, a time frame, of when we will have complete 24/7 cardiac care , at University Hospital Waterford?”

Cllr Declan Barry

In September 2022, the opening hours for the existing Cath Lab were extended to 8.00am – 8.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). The Programme for Government committed to the delivery of a second Cath Lab in University Hospital Waterford, which opened on 4th September 2023 and operates five days per week Monday to Friday, 8.00am - 6.00pm with 24 Whole Time Equivalents (WTEs). University Hospital Waterford has recently received approval to progress staffing for a 7 day 8am to 8pm service, recruitment is currently underway.

Dr Sinead Reynolds
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Waterford and Wexford
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"That the current age restrictions for Breast Check [50 – 69 years] and Bowel Screening [59 – 69 years] be changed to allow those aged 70+ years of age to avail of these cancer screening services and that a comprehensive awareness and promotional campaign, similar to Breast Check, follow to encourage all women to be breast aware and have screening mammograms."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Please see next page attached containing the response from the National Screening Service, Communications Department.

The HSE's National Screening Service runs four national population screening programmes: three that screen for cancer, and one that screens for diabetic retinopathy.

Our programmes focus on looking for early signs of disease in healthy people, so that we can:

- detect health issues early
- help prevent disease
- ensure that anyone who does develop the disease being screened for has the best chance of early, more effective treatment
- reduce people's risk of developing a disease or its complications
- support people in making informed decisions about their health.

We have published a new [strategic framework](#) to help us work to increase equity in screening and we are open to feedback and suggestions that would help us achieve increased awareness and participation in screening in your area.

About BreastCheck

BreastCheck invites women aged 50 to 69 for a free screening breast x-ray, called a mammogram. Screening is for well women, that is women who do not have [signs of breast cancer](#).

We invite women from 50 to 69 when we are screening in their area. We try to provide breast screening appointments close to where people live. We have 4 screening units in Dublin, Cork and Galway, and we have 24 mobile units that move between 54 different locations across the country. Mobile units stay in each location until we have invited women aged 50 to 69 in that area for breast screening.

We aim to invite women for their screening test by age 52 and every two years after that, up to the age of 69. Some women may be 53 when they are offered their first appointment and some will have three years between appointments, depending on when we are screening in their area.

If a woman's mammogram result shows that a follow-up appointment is needed, we offer her swift access to onward assessment and treatment. About 1 in 20 women are called back for more tests after screening. Being called back doesn't mean you have cancer. It may mean that the first mammogram was unclear. Most women are given a normal result after their second screening.

Age range for BreastCheck

As with any population screening programme, BreastCheck offers a one-size-fits all approach for the eligible population, and this means we have to constantly balance the benefits and harms of screening across the eligible population of women.

One of the harms of breast cancer screening, particularly for women aged 70 and over, is the risk of what is termed 'overdiagnosis'. This means finding a cancer that may never cause any problems or become life threatening. Another way of looking at it is a type of cancer that you are more likely to die 'with' rather than 'from'.

Approximately 43% (more than 1 in 3) of women diagnosed with breast cancer are over the age of 70 years. This is because the risk of getting breast cancer, like most other cancers, increases as we all get older. However, as women get older, overdiagnosis becomes more common and this would put some women through unnecessary anxiety, tests and treatment for a cancer that will not change their life expectancy.

If the scales tip more towards harms than benefits for a particular population or age group, then best practice in cancer screening programmes is clear - screening should not proceed. However, all screening programmes are dynamic, and part of our role is to monitor evidence and practice and respond when the evidence is sufficient to warrant change. We continue to keep evidence for changes to breast cancer screening under review.

The [National Screening Advisory Committee](#) (NSAC) is currently considering a proposal to widen the age range eligibility of the BreastCheck programme to 45 to 74 years and has asked Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) to examine the evidence for this proposal. NSAC is an independent committee that advises the Minister and Department of Health on all new proposals for population-based screening programmes and revisions to existing programmes.

Raising awareness of BreastCheck

Scientific evidence shows our screening programmes are improving the health of people living in Ireland and saving lives. We continue to actively explore new ways to increase participation in screening. This included a recent media campaign featuring Dympna Cremin, from Limerick, whose breast cancer was diagnosed through screening as part of October's Breast cancer Awareness Month. You can [watch Dympna's story here](#).

We recently launched a digital survey to capture real-time data and feedback from the women who choose breast screening to help inform us on what matters most to them about screening, and what they need from us to continue to improve our service and facilitate their attendance.

We work to make BreastCheck services accessible to all, for example providing longer or group appointments, and information in braille and easy read format, and international languages.

Being Breast Aware

It is important that every woman is breast aware. This means knowing what is normal for you so that if any unusual change occurs, you will recognise it. If cancer is found early, treatment is more likely to be successful. It is therefore important for women to get into the habit of looking at and checking their breasts at least on a monthly basis.

In conjunction with the [National Cancer Control Programme](#) (NCCP) we supported a student from Technological University of Shannon to develop a [video](#) which guides women to check their breasts and the symptoms to look out for. The video will be used in community cancer prevention work, and more information on checking your breasts, and on how you can reduce your risk of breast cancer, is available on our [website](#).

If a woman has concerns or symptoms concerning her breasts, she should not wait for screening, but should instead contact her GP who will give her the appropriate advice.

Women who have additional questions regarding breast screening can contact Freephone 1800 45 45 55 from 9am-6pm, Monday to Friday; or email

info@breastcheck.ie

About BowelScreen

People are eligible to take part in the BowelScreen programme from the age of 59 to 69.

Once the person gives their consent to participate, they are sent a [faecal immunochemical test](#) (or 'FIT kit') which is a test done at home and returned by post.

Bowel screening is a preventative health measure. The main purpose of BowelScreen is to reduce people's risk of developing bowel cancer in the future, by detecting and removing pre-cancerous adenomas in the lining of the bowel. Also, if bowel cancer is found early through screening, it's easier to treat and there's a better chance of recovery.

Age range

BowelScreen began in 2012. The programme has been implemented on a phased basis, starting with men and women aged 60 to 69. In 2023 we began expanding this age range, by inviting people aged 59 for screening. We are continuing to work towards offering bowel screening to people aged 55 to 74. We are expanding our age range gradually because we want to make sure everyone who does the screening test continues to have access to onward testing and treatment, if it's found to be needed.

We are working with colleagues in the HSE Endoscopy Programme to make sure we have access to the endoscopy services we need to enable us to expand bowel screening to more people. This is subject to the availability of national funding.

The [National Screening Advisory Committee](#) (NSAC) advises the Minister and Department of Health on all new proposals for population-based screening programmes and revisions to existing programmes. Following a request from NSAC, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) commenced work on a health technology assessment (HTA) of extending BowelScreen to those aged 50 to 54 years.

Increasing uptake rates

We are focused on increasing uptake rates for bowel cancer screening. In 2023, we conducted a large-scale survey of people aged 60-69 to understand their attitudes to screening, including the barriers and enablers that influence people's decision to accept a screening invitation. This [research](#) showed that levels of knowledge about bowel screening have increased when compared to previous studies. Research findings inform our public campaigns to help eligible people to choose screening.

As part of our work to increase screening uptake, we run public information campaigns to help people choose screening. We run campaigns at key times during the year: In October 2023, we ran an extensive campaign informing people of the availability of BowelScreen for people aged 59. In January, when many people take healthy decisions for the year ahead, we were live on national and local radio, on social media and had a poster campaign at the Aviva stadium. For Bowel Cancer Awareness Month in April 2024 we were also live on radio, social media and at the Aviva stadium. In autumn, we ran our national campaign and also ran a local campaign in counties Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Clare to encourage people in those areas to choose bowel screening. Using [real people telling their stories](#) has proved most effective on social media and radio increases calls to the BowelScreen call centre.

We provide BowelScreen materials in various formats to ensure that the eligible population has access to information on screening. We have information videos available in [25 languages](#) and we have developed easy read, plain English and photo story [resources to support people with additional needs](#).

We have developed a strategic framework outlining our priority areas for [improving equity in screening](#).

Being symptom aware

We continue to emphasise the importance of being symptom aware, no matter what age you are. Information on symptoms is available on our [website](#). We encourage anyone with symptoms to contact their GP who will give them appropriate advice on follow-up care.

For other queries, programme participants can call the Freephone information line on 1800 45 45 55; email: info@bowelscreen.ie; or contact their clinic directly.

Ends

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

"That this Forum supports the delivery of a standalone Oncology unit for cancer patients in the south west on the grounds of UHK and requests an urgent update regarding the timelines attached to the project, specifically requesting a completion date."

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

The new University Hospital Kerry Haematology and Oncology Capital infrastructural development project is at Stage 1 design concept of the HSE Estates South capital process. The full design and construction of the stand-alone unit will unfold over the coming years.

The permanent oncology unit is expected to be a comprehensive facility, catering for various aspects of cancer care.

Mary Fitzgerald
General Manager
University Hospital Kerry

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"I'm calling on the HSE to open a Dialysis Unit in Bantry General Hospital."

Cllr Danny Collins

The Acute Medicine Programme (AMP) defined hospitals as Model 1-4 based on the type of activity that can be provided. Bantry General Hospital (BGH) which is part of the Cork University Hospital Group (CUHG) is designated a Model 2R hospital.

Model 2 hospitals can provide the majority of hospital activity including extended day surgery, selected acute medicine, local injuries, a large range of diagnostic services (including endoscopy, laboratory medicine, point-of-care testing, and radiology (CT, US and plain film X Ray)) specialist rehabilitation medicine and palliative care.

The model of care to deliver a Renal dialysis service needs to be provided by a multidiscipline team to support the patient/client, their family and or carer and this service is delivered by our sister hospital in the Cardiac Renal Tower at Cork University Hospital (CUH). The multidisciplinary team at that centre provide 24/7 emergency renal service 365 days a year. Referrals can be made through a General Practitioner.

Renal services are also available at Kerry General Hospital.

Deirdre O'Keeffe
A/Chief Executive Officer
Cork University Hospital Group

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

"Could we be given a date for the full opening of the Cóbh Primary Care Centre including the existing Cóbh Medical Centre moving to this new Primary Care Centre in Ticknock, Cóbh."

Cllr Dominic Finn

I anticipate opening the new primary care centre in Cobh within the next 4 weeks, commencing with mental health services, community nursing and speech and language therapy moving on a phased basis to the new centre initially. Dental and the other disciplines will transition to Cobh Primary Care Centre in the New Year. The HSE will phase out primary care service provision from the existing health centre in due course.

**TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(h) on Agenda refers:

"Asking HSE for full update on the future plans for St Raphael's Centre Youghal."

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley

The HSE's plan for the future of the St. Raphael's campus includes a number of ambitious projects which will benefit the population of Youghal and its wider catchment area. These plans include:

- The construction of a 60 bed Community Nursing Unit
- The creation of a Paramedic Training College for the National Ambulance Service
- A Day Care Service for older persons
- The refurbishment and extension of the existing Oakvale Residential Home (Disability Services).
- A full capital submission has been made for the funding for same, in order to progress this project 2 No. dwelling are required to enable residents to be decanted while the refurbishment works are undertaken. One of these dwelling has been purchase and a second dwelling is currently being sought.

60 Bed community Nursing Unit (CNU)

The 60-bed residential care centre will comprise of a one-storey courtyard building with two 25 ensuite bedroom residential households, and a dementia unit with 10 ensuite bedrooms. A reception area, activity rooms, dining areas, offices and administration areas, a production kitchen, and plant areas are also included in the plan. The planning application for the Unit was submitted in April 2024 and it is anticipated that the main construction works will commence in Q1 2025.

Day Care Service for Older Persons

The HSE are in the process of carrying out a scoping exercise for Day Services for Older Persons

Oakvale Residential Unit

This project will involve the extension to the existing building to accommodate additional facilities and living spaces, ensuring ample room for enhanced care services, and improved communal areas for the residents. The interior spaces

of Oakvale will undergo a thoughtful reconfiguration to optimise functionality and suitability for aging residents. This includes the redesign of communal areas, bedrooms, and other facilities to align with the principles of person-centered care.

A full capital submission has been made for the funding for same, in order to progress this project 2 No. dwelling are required to enable residents to be decanted while the refurbishment works are undertaken. One of these dwelling has been purchase and a second dwelling is currently being sought.

Additional developments off campus

As well as the above developments on the St. Raphael's campus, members will be aware that plans are also progressing for the development of a new Primary Care Centre. Youghal Primary Care Centre (PCC) is being delivered via the HSE Primary Care Centre Operational Lease Model. The application for planning permission for Youghal PCC has been granted by Cork County Council. The following services are currently planned for provision in Youghal PCC:

- Dietetics;
- Occupational Therapy;
- Physiotherapy;
- Podiatry;
- Speech & Language Therapy;
- Community nursing services;
- Child medical services including childhood vaccinations.

The various stages involved in the development of a Primary Care Centre from inception to opening are outlined below. Youghal PCC is currently at stage 9.

1. Expressions of interest sought
2. Expressions of interest reviewed/assessed, and Stage 2/Stage 3 processes completed to determine the full details of proposed developments.
3. Stage 3 Applications assessed and preferred option identified
4. Application to HSE Property Committee to approve
5. Once approved by HSE Property Committee, depending on value of overall lease, application to HSE Board to approve
6. Letter of intent to proceed issued
7. Consultation with staff re layout and proposed layouts agreed with Developer
8. Planning permission sought
9. Legal agreements finalised (Lease/Service Level Agreement)
10. Consultation with staff re detailed design/room layouts
11. Build commences
12. Handover to HSE
13. Commissioning of building by CC Service i.e. equipping, services, IT etc.
14. Phased opening

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director
Estates Department, HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(i) on Agenda refers:

"To ask how many Caredocs operate a centralised call centre for patients trying to contact them and the rationale for same."

Cllr Fergal Browne

The Caredoc service is one of 17 GP co-operatives in operation across the country.

Caredoc covers Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, South Wicklow, Sligo, North Leitrim and West Cavan.

The Caredoc call assessment centre is located at St Dymphna's Hospital, Athy Road, Carlow.

Contact details are as follows:

South East and South Wicklow - 0818 300 365 or 059 91 38100
Sligo, Leitrim, and West Cavan - 0818 365 399

When a patient/caller contacts the Caredoc service their details are logged onto an expert system by experienced call takers. This electronic system holds the Caredoc Patient Electronic Record and all interactions and clinical consultation notes are saved within.

Each member GP receives an electronic message for their patients who attend Caredoc out of hours to enable continuity of care.

Within the South East there are also a number of treatment centres where patients will be seen located in Carlow, Kilkenny, Clonmel, Cashel, Dungarvan, Enniscorthy, Gorey, New Ross, Waterford City and Wexford Town.

Anna-Marie Lanigan
Head of Service-Primary Care
South East Community Healthcare

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"To ask for the details of all HSE capital projects in Cork city and county currently underway, in planning, design phase."

Cllr Peter Horgan

		Design phase	Underway	In planning
Cork City South CNU (St. Finbarr's) (PPP Project)	Development of 105 bed CNU (PPP)		Underway	
Midleton CH (PPP Project)	Development of 50 bed CNU (PPP)		Underway	
Killarney CNU (PPP Project)	Development of 130 bed CNU (PPP)		Underway	
Youghal CH	Upgrade CH in line with HIQA regulations			In planning
Kanturk CH	Upgrade CH in line with HIQA regulations		Underway	
Millstreet CH	Upgrade CH in line with HIQA regulations		Underway	
Fermoy CH	Upgrade CH in line with HIQA regulations		Underway	

St. Finbarr's Hospital, Clare's & Oliver's	Construction and installation of a modular building to facilitate resident accommodation to comply with HIQA regulations	Design		
Heather House Dementia Fit-Out	Refurbishment to form a 19 bedded Dementia Unit in the existing ground floor ward of Heather House CNU		Underway	
Barnahus South	Costruction of Sexual Health Treatment unit for Adults and Children	Design		
Macroom Health Centre	Conversion of Health Centre to Day Centre	Design		
Blarney Nursing Unit	Conversion of Blarney Golf Resort Hotel into Nursing home.		Underway	
MHS Carraig Mór	Reconfiguration and extension to the existing Centre to form an 18 Bed Unit.		Underway	
MHS St. Finbarr's Hospital, 20 Bed Unit	New Build / Reconfiguration to construct a new 20 Bed MH facility.	Design		
MHS St. Stephan's Hospital, 50 Bed Unit	New Build to construct a new 50 Bed MH facility.	Design		
MHS Owencurra, 10 Bed Unit, Midleton	Demolish and reconstruct a new 10 Bed MHS unit.		Underway	
MHS Dwelling	Refurbishment of MHS new dwelling, Midleton		Underway	
St. Michael's Ward	Refurbishment of St. Michael's ward, The Mercy	Design		
Eist Linn, Bessboro	FireWork Improvements		Underway	
St. Stephen's	Unit 5A - development of 3 bed facility	Design		
St Marys Health Campus	- Footpath to Link SMHC and Holyhill Town Centre	Design		
NAS Mallow Ambulance base	Mallow Ambulance base, Group 2 base	Design		
NAS SFB Cork Ambulance base	SFB Cork Ambulance base	Design		

NAS SFB Midleton Ambulance base	SFB Cork Ambulance base	Design		
NAS SFB Caherciveen Ambulance base	SFB Cork Ambulance base	Design		
CUH	Paediatric Inpatient Accommodation / Surgical Facility & Diagnostic Facility / Allied Health	Design		
	Paed's enabling works		Underway	
	Demolition works for Paed's			
	Helipad		Underway	
	Paediatric Emergency Project - Children's ED		Underway	
	Paediatric - ward 1c cladding		Underway	
	Ed Scanner & Trauma rhesus room		Underway	
	Hybrid Vascular Theatres	Design		
	Surgical Hubs	Design		
	TACC Development	Design		
	CRC Cladding		Underway	
	Oncology Services including multi-storey car park	Design		
	Abtran Building		Underway	
	Ophthalmology & blackwater		Underway	
	Ward Block	Design		
Mallow General Hospital	Phase 11 - 24 beds and Outpatient facility	Design		
	St. Mary's Redevelopment	Design		
Bantry General Hospital	Rehabilitation / Stroke Unit and 24 Beds	Design		
CUMH	Spot Cooling		Underway	
Cork South	Elective Hospital	Design		
SIVUH	Electrical capacity upgrade	Design		
MUH	Replacement of lifts x 2	Design		
	Installation of CT Scanner	Design		

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director
Estates Department
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

“Can we please have an update on progress being made on securing a location and agreements for an additional ambulance base in Killorglin to help cover the Mid and South Kerry area more effectively?”

Cllr Norma Moriarty

The General Manager NAS South West, has asked NAS Estates to enquire with HSE Estates regarding access to the Defence Forces (DF) building in Killorglin. This DF Infrastructure, could support an Emergency Deployment Point (EDP) which would provide the Operations Resource Manager for South Kerry with an option to deploy a Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) or Emergency Ambulance (EA), where capacity issues arise in the Iveragh Peninsula. This arrangement would be subject to DF and HSE Estates approval. The NAS Estates manager will be following up on this issue with HSE Estates later this month.

Rob Moriarty
National Ambulance Service

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on Agenda refers:

"Following the recent launch and publication of the pharmacy task force report where the role of the community pharmacy is proposed to be greatly enhanced in the provision of primary care. What supports are the HSE giving to assist in the delivery of the task force recommendations?"

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

The Health Service Executive (HSE) welcomes the recent report of the Expert Taskforce to Support the Expansion of the Role of Pharmacy. The Taskforce recommendations provide a clear pathway for achieving the overall ambition of pharmacists exercising independent, autonomous prescriptive authority.

As recommended in the Taskforce report, this process will be commenced in a stepwise manner with the introduction of a common conditions service, which will provide pharmacists with prescriptive authority linked to the recommended service parameters. The Department of Health (DoH) is the lead agency; and in conjunction with the HSE and key stakeholders has commenced work through an implementation oversight group (IOG) and relevant work streams, to ensure that the necessary clinical, legislative and regulatory framework and supports for the common conditions service are in place for 2025. To further support delivery of this service, the HSE has also formed a multidisciplinary clinical subgroup to contribute to the development of the clinical protocols for the initial eight common conditions as identified within the report. These resources and supports will be essential in underpinning the safe and patient centred delivery of the common conditions service by pharmacists in the community.

The Taskforce report also identifies the eHealth transformation initiatives as a key enabler in supporting the further expansion of the role of pharmacists to enable independent, autonomous prescriptive authority.

The DoH and HSE are implementing a significant eHealth transformation programme within the Health Service. This includes the development and

introduction of the Shared Care Record, ePrescribing and ICT communications between professionals, and will support clinical decision making when pharmacists are prescribing. Together, these initiatives will also support patient care transitions within the healthcare system and reduce the administrative burden for pharmacists and other stakeholders. There is also considerable ongoing work in the development of the Individual Health Identifier (IHI) and National Medicinal Product Catalogue (NMPC) which are essential elements for the overall eHealth programme and will underpin the necessary clinical and communication pathways required for pharmacist independent prescribing.

Following on from the common conditions service development, these eHealth initiatives will provide the necessary stepping stones to support the Taskforce's longer term ambition for pharmacists to exercise independent, autonomous prescriptive authority within and related to the individual practitioner's scope of practice and competence.

Pat Healy
National Director of National Services & Schemes
HSE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

7th November 2024

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

"Are the HSE getting updates from the receiver who recently took over Aperee Nursing Home in Bantry? It's vital that this stays as a nursing home for years to come and as if it doesn't it will cause extra strains on Bantry General Hospital."

Cllr Danny Collins

Private nursing homes are owned and managed by private nursing home operators. They are funded through the Nursing Home Support Act and have a contract with the National Treatment Purchasing Fund. The HSE has no governance or financial remit over any private nursing homes registered by HIQA.

Receivers were appointed to **Aperee Living in Conna**, near Fermoy, and **Aperee Living in Bantry** in late July 2024. The nursing homes' owners have assured staff and residents that the day to day operation of the two homes will not be impacted. The Department of Health and the HSE will continue to closely monitor developments in relation to nursing homes in this region formerly operated by Aperee Ltd. However, Aperee Ltd is a legal entity in its own right, and the HSE and the Department of Health do not have a role in relation to any court actions of Aperee Ltd and we cannot comment on matters before the courts.

Ensuring the welfare and safety of residents, their families and staff is the HSE's priority. In terms of contingency planning at this stage, there is a legal requirement that providers must give at least six months' notice to HIQA if they intend to close. This provides residents, families and public health authorities appropriate time to respond effectively.

TESS O'DONOVAN
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

MINUTES OF MEETINGS 2024

**MINUTES
MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 28th March 2024 at 11am

Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr Audrey Buckley*
Cllr Declan Burgess
Cllr Cathal Byrne*
Cllr Peter Cleere
Cllr Danny Collins
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Michael Doran*
Cllr Pat Dunphy*
Cllr Pat Fitzgerald*
Cllr Damien Geoghegan
Cllr Niall Kelleher
Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Mike Kennelly
Cllr Donal Kenny
Cllr Garry Laffan

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Eileen Lynch
Cllr Michael McCarthy
Cllr Susan McCarthy
Cllr Arthur McDonald
Cllr John McDonald*
Cllr Conor McGuinness
Cllr Richie Molloy
Cllr Norma Moriarty
Cllr John O'Donoghue*
Cllr Sean O'Donovan*
Cllr Jody Power*
Cllr John Sheehan
Cllr Mikey Sheehy*
Cllr Ted Tynan

Apologies:

Cllr Caroline Cronin
Cllr Mark Fitzgerald
Cllr Norma Moriarty
Cllr Susan McCarthy

In Attendance:

Dr Andy Phillips, Regional Executive Officer, HSE South West
Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

The Chairperson, Cllr Arthur McDonald welcomed members to the meeting. He also welcomed Dr Andy Phillips in his new role as Regional Executive Officer, South West – Cork and Kerry. Dr Gerard O’Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, Ms Tess O’Donovan. Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare, Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare and Mr Liam Woods, National Director of the Health Regions Programme.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday, 5th October 2023

On the proposal of Cllr Roger Kennedy seconded by Cllr John Coonan, the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 5th October 2023 were approved and adopted by the member.

2. Chairperson’s Correspondence

On the proposal of Declan Burgess, seconded by Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley the Annual Reports of 2022 and 2023 were approved and adopted by members.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (a)** South East Committee Meeting 9th of April in Kilkenny
- (b)** South West Committee Meeting 11th of April in Tralee

4. Presentation on the new Regional Health Areas given by Mr. Liam Woods, National Director Health Regions Programme.

Mr Liam Woods delivered his presentation on the new Health Areas. The chairperson invited Dr Andy Phillips, Regional Executive Officer to say a few words before the question and answer session.

Dr Phillips introduced himself and told members a little of his background in Health services over many years in Wales, New Zealand and Australia before taking up his current role as Regional Executive Officer of HSE South West (Cork and Kerry). Stating that he feels privileged to be REO to the South West Area. Dr Phillips explained that his job requires him to carry out Sláintecare in the South West area and in doing so he will be using six guiding principles including: Service quality, value for money, population health, staff experience, equity and sustainability. He finished by telling members that he is looking forward to working with public representatives and asked for their support in relation to the planning process for health service capital developments.

Questions and Answer Session:

The following questions were asked by members and responded to by HSE management:

- Speakers complimented the comprehensive presentation
- Speakers thanked Dr Andy Phillips for his attendance and introduction talk
- In the REO’s new role will the decision making rest with him
- Planned surgical hubs – progress on these

- Local decision making will progress the services and local medical to alert the local councillors
- How does the REO intend to tackle the long waiting times in ED department CUH
- HSE structures changing and reverting back to the older health board model
- Resource allocation within the new areas
- Future planning for car parking at hospitals
- Waiting times at EDs are a sign of difficulties in the through put of the hospital, the new build on UHK of single bed units is welcome and could solve these wait times along with assistance from Community Health and the county councils to have homes and grants ready for patients return home
- Support from Kerry County Councillors for REOs plans for Kerry
- Home Help service, can the embargo be lifted to improve the quantum of service delivery. The embargo has been lifted in early 2024

5. Notices of Motion

a) Cllr Declan Burgess moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the executive please provide a detailed report on the progress by the HSE to deliver the committed 60 bed Community Nursing Unit for Cashel."

and

(f) Cllr Roger Kennedy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Can I please have an update on the new Community Nursing Unit for Cashel Co Tipperary."

A written response from Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Declan Burgess outlined that he has submitted 10 motions on the Cashel Community Nursing Unit since joining the Regional Health Forum South. The new CNU is a very important project to the local area. Cllr Burgess thanked the HSE Estates Manager who had met with him and his South Tipperary colleagues (RHF and Oireachtas Members) in July 2023 to update them on developments. Communication is the key to success so he urged that information continues to be distributed to elected members in the area.

Cllr Burgess also expressed his hope that that Tipperary County Council will work in tandem with the HSE to progress this development and that both himself and Councillor Kennedy will continue to support as required.

Cllr Roger Kennedy stated that the Cashel Community Nursing Unit is a long awaited project and hopefully with the local area plan under review this year that it will progress. If the new development is located within HSE land it may help speed up the process.

Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer said that she hoped there would be developments on this project within the year both on design and planning process. Ms Lynch explained whilst the project may appear somewhat far away, it is certainly progressing.

Cllr Richie Molloy supported his South Tipperary colleagues with the development of a new Community Nursing Unit in Cashel.

(b) Cllr Mikey Sheehy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"What is the most recent update on the development of a standalone Oncology Unit at UHK and what are the project timelines?"

A written response from Mr Mark Kane, Assistant National Director, Capital & Estates Office HSE South was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehy thanked Mr Kane for the response and said that the stand alone Oncology Unit will be beneficial to not only those in Tralee, in South Kerry but all of the South West area. Its current design stage is a key stage for cancer patients, their families and staff.

Cllr Niall Kelleher echoed his colleague's sentiments on the new Oncology Unit at UHK.

Dr Ger O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, welcomed the progress on this project.

(c) Cllr Eileen Lynch moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Can the HSE please advise as to how many CAMHS teams in Cork City and County are without a permanent child psychologist; how many have a permanent child psychologist and what alternative measures are in place where there is not a permanent child psychologist available, particularly regarding extending the NTPF to child psychology assessments and use of the recently established regional psychological hubs."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Lynch thanked management for the response and for the explanation provided by Ms O'Donovan on the grading structure for staff within psychology services.

(d) Cllr Audrey Buckley moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Cork & Kerry HSE orthodontic surgeries, there is now a 6year waiting list for children to obtain orthodontics . Currently the median age of a child's first time visit to the orthodontist is 14yrs/15yrs . The HSE are telling patients that they will be 20 to 21years of age before they can access their orthodontic treatment. What are the HSE doing to bring the waiting lists down?"

and

(e) Cllr Michael Foley moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"To ask the HSE do they think it is acceptable that teenagers have to wait 5 to 6 years for orthodontic treatment. Resulting in being an adult before receiving the treatment."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Michael Foley stated that teenagers are very self conscious about their appearance especially at a time when social media plays such a big part in teenagers lives. Teenagers are being asked to wait up to 5 years for treatment and may well be adults before the treatment is completed. He asked if services could be outsourced to the private orthodontists in the region.

Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, agreed that the waiting lists are unacceptable. She explained that Covid added to the waiting lists as patients could not receive treatment at that time. The HSE are using private providers where possible but are finding it difficult to source orthodontists with availability to participate in waiting list initiatives. Ms O'Donovan said that she continues to use every avenue available to her to secure as much funding as possible from the National Programmes to address the waiting lists.

(f) This Motion was taken with motion (a) on Agenda.

(g) Cllr John O'Donoghue moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To help alleviate pressures on Tralee A&E, that the HSE would commit to providing a Minor Injury Clinic including an X-Ray facility in Killarney Town."

A written response from Mr Mark Kane, Assistant National Director, Capital & Estates Office HSE South was circulated to members and noted. Cllr O'Donoghue thanked Management for the reply and said he is well aware of the problems in the ED in UHK and thought a minor injury unit would not only be a great facility for Killarney but also help address the issues in the ED in UHK. He questioned the timelines for completion of a project like this.

Cllr Niall Kelleher agreed with Cllr O'Donoghue and stated it would be a welcome service in Killarney.

Cllr Michael Foley said he would welcome a minor injury unit to alleviate pressures on the ED in UHK.

Dr Ger O'Callaghan acknowledged the need for a Local Injury Unit in Kerry and explained that following a Countrywide Review of the need for LIUs in 2023, it was recommended that a unit was needed in Kerry. The location of the unit has yet to be finalised.

Dr Phillips stated that there was requirement for further discussions before a decision is made on the location of the Minor Injury Unit for Kerry.

(h) Cllr Caroline Cronin moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Requesting an Update on the Care and Rehabilitation Mental Health Service Unit at St. Stephen's Health Campus in Glanmire."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

(i) Cllr John Coonan moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the Regional Health Forum South endorses a view that a letter be written to the minister that procedures be put in place to make Health a curriculum and be prepared, developed and introduced as a matter of priority into our educational system."

A discussion was held in Chambers.

6. Questions

(a) Cllr. Declan Burgess put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE outline what steps are being taken to improve capacity in our GP services in South Tipperary. In the report can the HSE outline how many GP positions are currently vacant in the area and for how long they have been vacant."

A written response from Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Burgess stated that he was happy with the response.

(b) Cllr. Mary Lenihan Foley put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE provided an update on Primary Care unit in Youghal."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley stated that she has been submitting motions on this matter for the past 9 years and she welcomed the positive new outline in this response. She noted that the location of the primary care centre has changed from St Raphael's Campus to a green field site in recent times and requested further details on the new location as well as whether the centre would be developed by the HSE or privately. Finally, Cllr Lenihan Foley asked for information on the future plans for the existing buildings on the St Raphael's Campus.

Ms Tess O'Donovan agreed to revert to Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley with the additional information requested.

(c) Cllr. Eileen Lynch put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE outline the reasoning for withdrawing funding for the ADHD Ireland's Understanding and Managing Adult ADHD Programme (UMAAP) in 2024 and when and if they plan on reinstating funding for such a vital services."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

(d) Cllr Michael Foley put forward the following question:

"That the HSE provides an update on the South Doc service in Listowel."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Michael Foley stated that from the response it looked as if SouthDoc would do house calls, and that service users could attend the centre in Listowel by appointment only otherwise service users have to travel to the Tralee SouthDoc Centre to be seen. This was disappointing for such a large rural area as Listowel.

Ms O'Donovan said that recruitment of GPs and the shortage of GPs was an ongoing issue which is of concern to the HSE and to public representatives as well as to GPs themselves. Ms O'Donovan said that members of the Board of SouthDoc would attend the next South West Committee meeting to give a presentation to the members and address any queries they may have. Cllr Foley Welcomed this news.

(e) Cllr John O'Donoghue put forward the following question:

"In light of the fact that both The District Hospital and St. Colomanus' in Killarney will soon be vacated due to the wonderful new facility currently being developed, that the HSE would outline the plans they have for the buildings"

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr O'Donoghue linked this response to his earlier motion 4(g) on the Minor Injury Unit for Killarney and said that the campus would be a good location for such a unit in Killarney. Cllr O'Donoghue enquired about the timeline for completion of the review of the future use of the existing two buildings on the campus once the new Community /nursing Unit is completed and operational.

Ms O'Donovan stated the new Community Nursing Unit will be a very welcome addition to our services in the Killarney area and that she expects the review on the future campus to be completed before the end of the year.

Dr Andy Phillips stated that he has convened a HSE South West Capital Planning Workshop to discuss the short, medium and long term Capital needs for the region. The St. Columbanus campus will be discussed at the workshop and the outcomes of this will influence future plans.

Cllr Niall Kelleher stated that the St. Finan's campus in Killarney should also form part of the workshop and he called for the campus to be either retained for health service provision or made available to Kerry County Council who have an interest in acquiring the site.

7. Date and Time of next meeting – 22nd June 2024 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council. Co Cork.

MINUTES
MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday, 2nd May 2024 at 11am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr Audrey Buckley*
Cllr Declan Burgess*
Cllr Peter Cleere
Cllr Danny Collins*
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Michael Doran*
Cllr Pat Dunphy*
Cllr Pat Fitzgerald*
Cllr Michael Foley*
Cllr Stephanie Keating*

Cllr Niall Kelleher*
Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Eileen Lynch*
Cllr Michael McCarthy
Cllr Susan McCarthy*
Cllr Arthur McDonald
Cllr Norma Moriarty*
Cllr Sean O'Donovan
Cllr John Sheehan*
Cllr Mikey Sheehy*

Apologies:

Cllr Jody Power
Cllr Garry Laffan

In Attendance:

Dr Andy Philips, Regional Executive Officer, HSE South West
Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Anna Marie Lanigan, Head of Primary Care, South East Community Healthcare
Ms Fiona Murphy, Chief Executive, HSE National Screening Programme
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 28th March 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Roger Kennedy seconded by Cllr Michael McCarthy, the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 28th March 2024 were adopted by members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

No correspondence. Cllr McDonald Chairman thanked Members and Management for their support and co-operation over the last period of the Regional Health Forum.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings:

- (a) South East Committee Meeting held on 8th October 2024 in Kilkenny
- (b) South West Committee Meeting held on 10th October 2024 in Cork

4. Notices of Motion

(a) Cllr Norma Moriarty moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"That a podiatry clinic run for in patients at Cahersiveen Community Hospital be extended to outpatients from the area to ensure they do not have to travel to Tralee to avail of such a service."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Moriarty thanked HSE Management for their reply. She asked whether vacant posts were as a result of the lack of skills/podiatrists or as a result of the recruitment embargo.

In reply Ms Tess O'Donovan stated that there were challenges as a result of the recruitment pause. However there is an overall shortage of trained podiatry graduates - at present University College Galway is the only college which offers a podiatry course. As with other healthcare courses across the country there is a need to increase the number of third level training places available to increase capacity on a sustainable basis. The further and higher education sector has a critical role to play in ensuring that healthcare services have the staff they need to deliver the care that people need.

It is also important to examine how best to deliver the service having regard for limited resources and this may mean having to bring clients to a central clinic location.

(b) Cllr Mikey Sheehy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That's this Forum writes to CORU – Regulating Health & Social Care Professionals to query the current delays being experienced by physiotherapists who are returning to Ireland to work from the UK in registering."

A written response from CORU was circulated to members and noted. CORU is continuously developing and improving processes to ensure timely recognition / registration of applicants. It should also be noted that registration is a document based process and requires applicants to submit the required documentation in the first instance. At times there may be delays with progressing registration as a result of incomplete or missing information.

(c) Cllr Eileen Lynch moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Can the HSE outline the number of children awaiting assessment of needs assessments under the Disability Act 2005 in CHO4 and the current waiting times."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Lynch acknowledged the comprehensive reply from HSE Management. She had a number of follow-on queries in relation to age limits for assessments, the average timeframe from desktop review to clinical assessment and guidelines for completion of assessments.

In reply Ms Tess O'Donovan stated that she would arrange to revert directly to Cllr Lynch in relation to timeframes.

Ms O'Donovan advised that Assessment of Need under the Disability Act (2005) are carried out in chronological order based upon date of receipt of completed application. The numbers of applications for Assessment of Need under the Act have risen steadily over the last number of years. The availability of appropriate staff to complete diagnostic assessments is critical. We are actively working (within available resources) to reduce waiting times.

Children do not require a diagnosis or Assessment of Need to access health services within the HSE. Parents/guardian can refer their child directly to their local Primary Care Service or Children's Disability Network Team.

(d) Cllr Danny Collins moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"I'm calling on the HSE to provide the BreastCheck Truck to come to Bantry at least once a year if not more."

A written response from Ms Lynne Caffrey, Senior Communications Officer, National Screening Service was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Collins thanked the National Screening Service for their reply. He outlined concerns in relation to insufficient mobile screening units/services and particularly in

rural areas. Cllr Collins stated that there should be additional investment in mobile screening units. This was supported by a number of other Members. In addition the reduction in the screening age by BreastCheck (from 50 years to 40 years) was raised.

In reply Fiona Murphy, Chief Executive, HSE National Screening Programme, advised that they strongly encourage all eligible women (aged 50 to 69 years) to come forward for screening. In their scheduling of areas, BreastCheck ensure that eligible women are on the same 2 year cycle. There was a delay as a result of the Covid pandemic (and associated restrictions) and there has been a catch-up programme. There are between 21-24 mobile units in operation and the focus available resources is to reach greater concentrations of eligible women.

BreastCheck welcome support in relation to identifying suitable site locations and are working to develop more fixed locations which would in turn free up mobile units for more rural areas. With regard to the suggestion of lowering the age of screening, BreastCheck have put forward a proposal to lower the age to 45 years (as per European recommendation).

There were a number of inputs from Members who were all supportive of the screening programme and who wished to see the programme expanded.

BreastCheck is working with community groups to increase awareness and also have ads on social media to increase awareness of the programme. With regard to the 2 year cycle for screening, Fiona Murphy advised members that there is a 3 year cycle for screening in Northern Ireland/UK. Ms Murphy BreastCheck thanked Members for their support and considerable interest in the screening programme. She asked that in their role as public representatives that they increase awareness of the BreastCheck Programme among their constituents.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr Declan Burgess put forward the following question:

"The HSE Civil Registration Service is vital to the community in Cashel and District. Currently due to a recent retirement the service has ceased operation and hasn't been able continue due to the recruitment embargo. Can the HSE advise on the future of this service and what plans they have to return this service to the locality in Cashel."

A written response from Ms Stephanie Lynch, Acting Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Burgess acknowledged the written reply. He cited his disappointment with the temporary cessation of the service and queried whether there was a timeline for the resumption of civil registration services in Cashel. Ms Anna Marie Lanigan in response advised that unfortunately it was not possible at this time to give an affirmative timeframe. Ms Lanigan stated that the Civil Registration post is a priority area for the derogation process.

(b) Cllr. Norma Moriarty put forward the following question:

"Can we get an update from the National Ambulance Service on plans to extend the number of bases they have in the South Kerry area?"

A written response from Mr Robert Morton, Director, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. Mr Morton also outlined Ambulance activity in the South Kerry area. Whilst any developments require capital funding, the Ambulance Service are examining a number of innovative options. Mr Morton informed Members that that he had visited South Kerry and engaged with stakeholders on related matters.

Cllr Moriarty noted the reply and stated that she would absolutely support any action to acquire a building (subject to capital finance) in the Kilorglin area. Cllr Moriarty was delighted that Ambulance Management had visited the area to see the situation on the ground. Cllr Moriarty also noted the collaborative working with the Department of Defence.

(c) Cllr. Mikey Sheehy put forward the following question:

"Some children with autism and special needs were cut off from full services during the pandemic. Early intervention is key in these areas. Does the HSE have a plan to address their requirements going forward in terms of assessments and care?"

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Ms O'Donovan stated that if this related to particular individual case in the community that she would be happy for Cllr Sheehy to make direct contact on the matter and that she would follow-up.

(d) Cllr Eileen Lynch put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE provide an update in relation to when the Millstreet Hospital works will reach completion and be formally opened."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Lynch thanked HSE Management for the comprehensive reply. She had further queries in relation to the process for phased opening, HIQA registration and staffing. With regard to staff recruitment, Ms Tess O'Donovan advised that recruitment commenced last year. Whilst the ideal would be to open all the beds together, however there is a need to consider practicalities including staffing which may necessitate a phased opening of the beds.

6. Date and Time of next meeting - 21st June 2024 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

MINUTES MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday, 18th July 2024 at 11am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Liam Brazil
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr Cathal Byrne*
Cllr Danny Collins*
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Caroline Cronin
Cllr David Dunne
Cllr Pat Dunphy
Cllr Deirdre Ferris*
Cllr Dominic Finn
Cllr John Fleming
Cllr Ger Frisby
Cllr Damian Geoghegan
Cllr Finbarr Harrington
Cllr Pat Hayes
Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae*
Cllr Peter Horgan

Chairperson

Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Fiona Kerins*
Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Margaret McDonnell
Cllr Marie Moloney
Cllr Norma Moriarty
Cllr Marie Murphy
Cllr John O'Leary
Cllr Tony O'Shea*
Cllr Daniel Pender
Cllr Liam Quaide*
Cllr John Sheehan*
Cllr Mikey Sheehy
Cllr Michael Smith
Cllr Frank Staples
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

Vice Chairperson

*** attended online**

Apologies:

Dr Andy Phillips, Regional Executive Officer, HSE South West
Ms Martina Queally, Regional Executive Officer, HSE Dublin and South East

In Attendance:

Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Anna Marie Lanigan, Head of Primary Care, South East Community Healthcare
Mr Gearoid Rennicks, Senior Press Officer, Ireland East Hospital Group*
Mr Ray Dwyer, Home Support Section, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 2nd May 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Norma Moriarty seconded by Cllr Pat Dunphy, the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 2nd May 2024 were adopted by members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

Election of Chairperson:

The June meeting is the Annual General Meeting of the Regional Health Forum South and elections of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson were to take place. Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group invited nominees from the floor for the position of Chairperson.

Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern was proposed by Cllr Roger Kennedy and seconded by Cllr. Norma Moriarty. As there were no other nominations, Cllr. Ann Marie Ahern was elected. On assuming the Chair, Cllr. Ahern thanked her proposer, seconder and the members for electing her as Chairperson for the coming year.

Election of Vice Chairperson:

Cllr Ahern invited nominees for the position of Vice Chairperson. Cllr. Pat Hayes was proposed by Cllr. John Coonan and seconded by Cllr. Mikey Sheehy as there were no other nominations, Cllr. Hayes was deemed elected.

Cllr Ahern read out a short summary document of Standing Orders and an overview of the background and role of Regional Health Forums in the HSE.

Vote of Sympathy

The members expressed their sincere sympathies to Annette O'Connell HSE/Regional Health Forum Office on the unexpected passing of her niece Dr. Meg Haugh on 2nd May 2024. Meg completed placements in Cork University Hospital, Kerry University Hospital and Mercy University Hospital as part of her medical training. The Forum Members together with HSE Management extended their deepest condolences to Annette, Meg's parents, siblings, grandfather, extended family and friends. A moment of silence was observed. Suaimhneas síoraí dá hanam.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings:

- (a) South East Committee Meeting held on 8th October 2024 in Kilkenny
- (b) South West Committee Meeting held on 10th October 2024 in Cork

4. Presentation on the Nursing Homes Support Scheme

Mr Ray Dwyer, Home Support Office gave the presentation on the Nursing Home Support Scheme (also known as Fair Deal). This scheme operated by the Health Service Executive (HSE) provides financial support to people who need long-term

nursing home care. Under this scheme, participants contribute to the cost of their care according to their means, while the State pays the balance of the cost. The scheme covers approved private nursing homes, voluntary nursing homes and public nursing homes. A question and answer session followed with a number of contributions from members. The Regional Health Forum members thanked Mr Dwyer for his informative presentation.

5. Date and Time of next meeting - 19th September 2024 at 11am. **Venue:** Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

MINUTES MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday, 19th September 2024 at 11am
Venue: Meeting Room, Floor 16, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern
Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Liam Brazil
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr Cathal Byrne*
Cllr Danny Collins*
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Caroline Cronin
Cllr David Dunne
Cllr Pat Dunphy
Cllr Deirdre Ferris*
Cllr Dominic Finn
Cllr John Fleming
Cllr Ger Frisby
Cllr Damian Geoghegan
Cllr Finbarr Harrington
Cllr Pat Hayes
Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae*
Cllr Peter Horgan

Chairperson

Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Fiona Kerins*
Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Margaret McDonnell
Cllr Marie Moloney
Cllr Norma Moriarty
Cllr Marie Murphy
Cllr John O'Leary
Cllr Tony O'Shea*
Cllr Daniel Pender
Cllr Liam Quaide*
Cllr John Sheehan*
Cllr Mikey Sheehy
Cllr Michael Smith
Cllr Frank Staples
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

Vice Chairperson

*** attended online**

In Attendance:

Ms Bridie O'Sullivan, Director of Nursing, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare
Ms Eithne Mullen, Director of Strategy, Transformation & Improvement, Ireland East Hospital Group*
Mr Gearoid Rennicks, Senior Press Officer, Ireland East Hospital Group*
Dr Anne Sheahan, Area Director of Public Health, HSE South West
Ms Mairéad Fennessy, Communications, South East Community Healthcare
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern opened the meeting welcomed both members and HSE Management.

Vote of Sympathy for our colleague Deirdre Meredith who sadly passed away on 27th August 2024. Deirdre worked in recent years with the Office of Head of Service/Primary Care, HSE/South East Community Healthcare. She provided support and assistance with queries from Regional Health Forum and Oireachtas members. Deirdre's courtesy and professionalism in her work was appreciated by all and she will be greatly missed. We extend our sympathies to Deirdre's husband (and our colleague in HSE Superannuation/South East) Mark Finnegan, their children, her parents, siblings and extended family and friends. May Deirdre Rest in Peace.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 18th July 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Coonan seconded by Cllr Horgan, the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 18th July 2024 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (c) South East Committee Meeting held on 8th October 2024 in Kilkenny
- (d) South West Committee Meeting held on 10th October 2024 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

(a) Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Can we have full update on the Primary Care Unit in Youghal and how far it has progressed."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

(b) Cllr Mikey Sheehy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Do the HSE have any further plans to develop primary care centres in Tralee and what is the current update for the delivery of a minor injuries unit for Kerry."

This was taken with Motions 4(e) and 4(h) as follows:

(e) Cllr Jackie Healy Rae moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the HSE would seek to set up minor injury clinics throughout the county of Kerry, this would in turn relieve the pressure that is currently on our A&E unit in UHK."

(h) Cllr Marie Moloney moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"That the HSE would locate a minor injuries clinic in Killarney."

A written response from Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospital Group and Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Jackie Healy Rae noted reply advising that a Minor Injury Clinic (MIU) development is aligned to the HSE Capital Plan 2024. He asked what services would be delivered by the MIU once operational.

Cllr Moloney thanked HSE Management for the reply and welcomed confirmation that the new development would be progressed in Killarney.

Ms Bridie O'Sullivan South/South West Hospital Group stated that from an acute hospital perspective MIUs are welcome developments as the HSE moves to develop alternate pathways and for people to be able to access services and care where appropriate in their local area for a range of injuries thereby enabling A&E staff to concentrate on people with serious and life threatening conditions. This development of Minor Injury Units are in line with Sláintecare.

(c) Cllr Fergal Browne moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Could the HSE clearly outline status and timelines for development of site at Kelvin Grove Athy Road Carlow?"

A written response from Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Browne noted that this matter has been going on for a considerable time with little progress to date. Ms Doyle advised Cllr Browne that she would liaise with HSE Estates in relation to any further update on proposed developments at Kelvingrove and once available would arrange to forward to the Councillor.

(d) Cllr Cathal Byrne moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To ask the HSE to give an update on the 97 bed extension for Wexford General Hospital and whether it has any further capital development works planned for Wexford General Hospital."

A written response from Ms Linda O'Leary, General Manager, Wexford General Hospital was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Byrne thanked HSE Management for this reply and acknowledged the ongoing work in progressing this significant hospital development.

(f) Cllr Peter Horgan moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That this forum supports the need to regularise and equalise pay and pension conditions for all workers operating in the CDNT ecosystem with their counterparts in

primary care to ensure equal parity in pay and pension rights to support recruitment and retention and will write to the Taoiseach and All ministers of the Government on this matter.”

A written response from Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare and Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, South West Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Horgan stated that this was a serious matter given the vacancy rate in CDNTs across the Cork / Kerry area. Tess O'Donovan Chief Officer stated that there are challenges in recruitment right across the health system. With regard to Disability Services in Cork and Kerry, she clarified that the Lead Agencies who provide services on behalf of the HSE are responsible for the ongoing recruitment to the CDNTs. There is agreement nationally for these Section 38/39 agencies to use HSE Panels which should ease some of these recruitment challenges. Any offer of employment and pay and conditions are under the auspices of the Lead Agency. Ms O'Donovan acknowledged that there is a need for fully staffed CDNTs to address increasing service demand and waiting lists. Every effort is being made to recruit staff to vacant posts including recruitment abroad initiatives.

(g) Cllr Norma Moriarty moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

“When it comes to securing housing for people with Intellectual Disabilities the current policy/protocol by the HSE inhibits houses being made available for this purpose as it insists that no members of a family that wish to provide a house for multiple occupancy are to be allowed to continue to live there. This has resulted in the loss of two such homes in Kerry alone in the last year for a sector that desperately needs this accommodation. My question/motion is why allow an overly stringent protocol to continue when surely a case by case examination of what is feasible could result in more units being made available?”

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, South West Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty stated that she had been invited to attend a meeting of Intellectual Disability Service Providers and a Family in Kerry. The family are very willing to offer their home as housing for disability clients - however it is understood they could not do so because of legal obligations and protections. Families whose children are now adults wish to make accommodation available in an effort to bring additional residential houses into use having regard for the high demand for residential places which exceeds availability of same. Cllr Moriarty asked whether the HSE is being overly cautious on this.

Ms Tess O'Donovan stated that the offer of housing for the provision of residential services is reviewed on an individual basis with the relevant person/family. In addition to considerable legal obligations, there are other requirements to consider including safeguarding, suitability, staffing, refurbishment costs to meet registration (with independent regulatory body HIQA) conditions. Cork Kerry Healthcare continue to advocate for additional funding to expand the number of residential places.

(i) Cllr John Sheehan moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That in view of the well proven harmful effects of vaping, especially to young people, this Forum would call on the Minister for Health to bring in further measures to restrict their widespread use among non-smokers, especially in terms of marketing and availability."

A written response from Dr Anne Sheehan, Area Director of Public Health, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehan thanked Dr Sheehan for her written reply. He stated that there is was considerable evidence on the negative impact of vapes. Cllr Sheehan welcomed the legislation currently being drafted to restrict the use of nicotine inhaling products and the ban on the sale, manufacture or import of single-use or disposable vapes in Ireland. Cllr Sheehan highlighted how vaping products are being marketed to young people and agreed with the proposed restriction on the sale of flavours which appeal to children, as well as a ban on point of sale advertising displays in shops. Cllr Sheehan stated that nicotine inhaling products should be reoriented as medicinal products to assist people who are trying to quit smoking.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr. Damien Geoghegan put forward the following question:

"Following the cessation of services, what plans do the HSE have regarding the replacement of the registrar and the continuation of registry office services in Dungarvan, Co Waterford?"

A written response from Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Geoghegan whilst acknowledging reply from HSE Management, sought clarity in relation to recruitment of staffing to the civil registration services. Ms Doyle advised that she would seek an update on this and arrange for a reply to issue.

(b) Cllr. Mikey Sheehy put forward the following question:

"Will this Forum support my call to make the shingles vaccine available to all persons in older age brackets. The monetary cost of this vaccine is prohibitive in Ireland in comparison to other countries."

A written response from Dr Anne Sheehan, Director of Public Health, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

(c) Cllr. Cathal Byrne put forward the following question:

"To ask the HSE to provide the number of persons over 16 and under 16 on waiting lists for speech and language therapy in County Wexford and the numbers waiting more than 12, 26, 52 and 104 weeks respectively."

A written response from Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Byrne acknowledged the reply and asked Management to clarify sentence advising no Speech and Language Therapist on Wexford South CAMHS Team which it is understood is a result of a vacancy.

(d) Cllr. Jackie Healy Rae put forward the following question:

"How many people are waiting for cataract operations in the SSWHG, please give a breakdown as to how long these people have been waiting and give an age profile of the patients."

A written response from Ms Helen Donovan, Chief Executive Officer, South Infirmity Victoria University Hospital was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Healy-Rae was satisfied with this reply.

(e) Cllr Peter Horgan put forward the following question:

"The amount paid to consultancy houses for the provision of services within each individual hospital and hospital group under the remit of this forum, in the years 2022, 2023, 2024 year to date, in tabular form, detailed by the type of service provided."

A written response from Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South\South West Hospital Group was not ready with information still outstanding and is to be forwarded to Cllr Horgan on completion.

(f) Cllr. Fergal Browne put forward the following question:

To ask when the charge for getting bloods tested by local GPs was first introduced for medical cardholders and if this can be waived in the case of patients recovering from cancer.

A written response from Ms Geraldine Crowley, Assistant National Director, Enhanced Community Care Programme & Primary Care Contracts was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Browne thanked Management for this reply and advised he would work with people involved to clarify process and signpost as appropriate in relation to charges.

(g) Cllr. Pat Dunphy put forward the following question:

"How many people who have been approved for Home Care in the South East and are still waiting on the service? How long are applicants currently waiting to have the service in place from when it was approved?"

A written response from Ms Michelle Doyle, A/Chief Officer, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Dunphy acknowledged the reply, however he raised concerns in relation to the availability of staff to deliver home support services and particularly in rural areas given the ongoing recruitment difficulties.

Ms Michelle Doyle A/Chief Officer stated that recruitment and retention challenges impact on the ability to deliver approved services either in part or in full. Despite the significant level of service provision, the demand for Home Support, has grown considerably over the past number of years given the ageing population, increasing dependency and more complex cases presenting.

Ms Doyle advised of the ongoing national Home Support Improvement Programme with the aim of standardising service delivery across health regions, making home support services more person-centred and in preparation for regulation of the services.

(h) Cllr. Norma Moriarty put forward the following question:

Can we please have an update on when the Clinical Nurse Specialist / Crisis Intervention Nurse Post as this it is a key position that needs to be filled as a priority.

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, South West Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty stated that she was not satisfied with the reply as there was no definite timeframe. Tess O'Donovan advised that there is a panel in place, however there is a Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) ceiling is also in operation and Cork Kerry Healthcare as with other health areas is required to prioritise all posts. Ms O'Donovan advised Cllr Moriarty that she would provide an update to her on the post in a few weeks. Cllr Moriarty thanked Ms O'Donovan and hoped there would be a positive update forthcoming.

(i) Cllr. Marie Moloney put forward the following question:

"What is the up-to-date position with regard to the provision of a Primary Care Centre in Killarney"

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, South West Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moloney thanked HSE Management for the reply and noted the benefits of having a Primary Care facility in Killarney. Cllr Moloney asked for clarification in relation to the site and specifically when work will commence on this development. Ms O'Donovan in response advised that there are a number of stages to completion in a capital development process. The HSE is liaising with Kerry County Council on the proposed development on a local authority site. It is not possible for the HSE to provide specific timeframes for the development at present as it will be necessary to wait until the formal advisory for Budget Allocation 2025 is received.

(j) Cllr. John Sheehan put forward the following question:

"That the HSE would provide an update in relation to the proposed badly needed new Primary Care Centre for the Blarney Area"

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, South West Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehan noted the reply and stated that he hoped for the Primary Care Centre to be progressed as soon as possible given the local need for this facility.

6. Date and Time of next meeting - 7th November 2024 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, County Hall, Co Cork.

Two Matters of Urgency - Raised by Councillors Jackie Healy Rae and Peter Horgan

1. Ambulance Service West Cork and Kerry - Cllr Jackie Healy Rae

Cllr Jackie Healy Rae raised the urgent matter of a decision by the National Ambulance Service (NAS) in relation to plans to restrict emergency ambulance cover in West Cork and Kerry which were to come into effect by the 23rd September 2024. This would have significant detrimental impact on the local populations in the large geographic areas covered in West Cork and Kerry. It is understood that following Ministerial intervention, that the HSE / NAS subsequently clarified that there is no current or planned reduction of NAS services for Cork and Kerry. Whilst this intervention and clarification was welcomed, Members including Cllrs Healy Rae, Harrington, Moloney, Collins, Ferris, Moriarty and Quaide all raised their concerns in relation to ambulance services which they indicated are already severely stretched and reported that staff are burnt out. Additional funding is urgently required for additional paramedic staff and vehicles to provide essential emergency cover.

There was no representative from NAS in attendance at this meeting - understandably as this was raised as an urgent matter with little advance notice. Ms Tess O'Donovan advised RHF Members that NAS has operational responsibility for the service and she would bring concerns to them as appropriate.

2. St Killian's Special School, Cork - Cllr Peter Horgan

Cllr Peter Horgan raised the urgent issue regarding the provision of therapists in St Killian's Special School. He highlighted the need of children attending the school and asked the reason for the delay in putting Therapists into the school. He questioned why the HSE is not outsourcing therapy services to private providers. Cllr Marie Ahern agreed that there is a need therapists in the school. Cllr Margaret McDonald also supported Cllr Horgan on this issue.

Ms Tess O'Donovan in reply advised that the Government has prioritised the reinstatement of health and social care supports in special schools. In that regard, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) is continuing to engage with its CDNT lead agencies to progress this work and solutions.

Specifically St. Killian's Special School is aligned to Children's Disability Network Team CDNT 8. Cllr Horgan asked further questions in relation to the Pilot Scheme and also in relation to discretion in relation to funding to provide a solution to this urgent concern. Ms O'Donovan advised of a national pilot scheme in relation to Special Schools – whilst St Killian's is not part of current phase although it is understood that another phase is upcoming.

MINUTES MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday, 7th November 2024 at 11am
Venue: Meeting Room, Floor 16, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern **Chairperson**

Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Tomas Breathnach*
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr Cathal Byrne*
Cllr Danny Collins
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Caroline Cronin*
Cllr David Dunne*
Cllr Pat Dunphy*
Cllr Deirdre Ferris*
Cllr Dominic Finn
Cllr John Fleming
Cllr Ger Frisby
Cllr Damian Geoghegan
Cllr Finbarr Harrington

Cllr Peter Horgan
Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Fiona Kerins*
Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Margaret McDonnell
Cllr Norma Moriarty *
Cllr Marie Murphy *
Cllr John O'Leary
Cllr Daniel Pender *
Cllr Liam Quaide*
Cllr Mikey Sheehy
Cllr Frank Staples
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

*** attended online**

Apologies:

Cllr Marie Moloney

In Attendance:

Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Priscilla Lynch, IHA Manager, Cork North and East, HSE South West
Ms Roseanne Killeen, IHA Manager, HSE Dublin and South East *
Mr Gearoid Rennicks, Senior Press Officer, Ireland East Hospital Group*
Mr Rob Moriarty, Operations Manager, National Ambulance Service *
Ms Mairead Fennessy Communications and Public Affairs South East
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern opened the meeting welcomed both members and HSE Management.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 18th July 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Ger Frisby seconded by Cllr Mikey Sheehy the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 18th July 2024 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (a) South East Committee Meeting held on 3rd December 2024 in Kilkenny
- (b) South West Committee Meeting held on 5th December 2024 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

(a) Cllr Ann Marie Ahern moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Can the HSE please advise if a new permanent building is in plans for the ambulance service in Midleton, to include but not limited to staff quarters, offices and secure locked dispensing units as they are currently working out of portacabins"

A written response from Mr Rob Moriarty, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. NAS Management have recently met with HSE Estates to progress development of a new NAS Station in Midleton. Once suitable sites are identified, a full capital submission will be made to the National Capital and Property Steering Group for approval to proceed. Cllr Ahern thanked the NAS for their response and urged for this matter to be addressed as a priority.

(b) Cllr Peter Horgan moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"In order to achieve safe staffing levels as needed by frontline workers across the South West region, to detail the amount of vacancies, including all current sick leave absences, maternity leave, career break and all other leave categories in Cork University Hospital. The full cost of filling all those vacancies, apart from sick leave, to ensure safe staffing levels."

A written response from Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospital Group was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan thanked Management for this reply. He requested that further details be provided to

him where available. In response Dr O'Callaghan outlined that some of the information requested may not be routinely captured by HR management systems.

(c) Cllr Declan Barry moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Can the HSE give the people of Waterford and the South East, a time frame, of when we will have complete 24/7 cardiac care , at University Hospital Waterford?"

A written response from Dr Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Health Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Whilst acknowledging the written response, Cllr Barry indicate that it did not provide sufficient detail on timeframes. On behalf of Dr Reynolds, Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, advised members that there since September 2022 there has been progression in cardiac care provision and coverage in University Hospital Waterford.

As outlined in the written response recruitment is ongoing and Hospital Management are working through any issues that arise as part of this process. Ms Killeen advised Cllr Barry that she would seek further information for the next meeting.

(d) Cllr Norma Moriarty moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the current age restrictions for Breast Check [50 – 69 years] and Bowel Screening [59 – 69 years] be changed to allow those aged 70+ years of age to avail of these cancer screening services and that a comprehensive awareness and promotional campaign, similar to Breast Check, follow to encourage all women to be breast aware and have screening mammograms."

A written response from the Communications Department, National Screening Service was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty thanked Management for their reply.

(e) Cllr Mikey Sheehy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That this Forum supports the delivery of a standalone Oncology unit for cancer patients in the south west on the grounds of UHK and requests an urgent update regarding the timelines attached to the project, specifically requesting a completion date."

A written response from Ms Mary Fitzgerald, General Manager, University Hospital Kerry was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Sheehy thanked Management for the written reply. However he was very frustrated to note that the Project is still in the same position Stage 1 with no movement. Cllr Sheehy asked for clarity and a more detailed response. Dr Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospital Group stated that he would follow up further with HSE Estates.

(f) Cllr Danny Collins moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"I'm calling on the HSE to open a Dialysis Unit in Bantry General Hospital."

A written response from Ms Deirdre O'Keeffe, A/Chief Executive Officer, Cork University Hospital Group was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Collins outlined the need for a Dialysis Unit in Bantry Hospital – particularly given the considerable hardship for dialysis patients from the area in terms of distances and time to access their treatment. Cllr Finbarr Harrington supported Cllr Collins in this Motion. Dr Gerard O'Callaghan advised that Renal Dialysis is a specialised service which is not usually located in a Level 2 Hospital (Bantry General Hospital). It is unlikely that this service as currently provided will change in the near future. Dr O'Callaghan noted Cllr Collins's concerns and advised he would bring to the attention of Hospital Management.

(g) Cllr Dominic Finn moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Could we be given a date for the full opening of the Cobh Primary Care Centre including the existing Cobh Medical Centre moving to this new Primary Care Centre in Ticknock, Cobh."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Finn was pleased to note that services would commence in the new Primary Care Centre imminently on a phased basis. Tess O'Donovan Chief Officer agreed that this would be very positive for overall improved patient experience. It is anticipated that Dental Services and some other service would move in to the Primary Care Centre in the New Year once the required dental chairs and equipment were in situ.

(h) Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Asking HSE for full update on the future plans for St Raphael's Centre Youghal"

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley thanked Management for this very detailed comprehensive reply - she welcomed this positive update.

(i) "To ask how many Caredocs operate a centralised call centre for patients trying to contact them and the rationale for same."

Cllr Fergal Browne

A written response from Ms Ann Marie Lanigan, Head of Service, Primary Care, South East Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Browne whilst acknowledging the written reply outlined his dissatisfaction with the centralised system and poor experience and delays in getting through. Ms Killeen

advised Cllr Browne that it is a very busy time for the healthcare system and Out of Hours GPs and particularly during seasonal peaks with increased demands. Roseanne Killeen IHA Manager asked Cllr Browne to bring any individual complaints or issues in relation to delays with the call system to her attention and she would arrange to follow up with Primary Care and Caredoc.

6. Questions

(a) Cllr. Peter Horgan put forward the following question:

"To ask for the details of all HSE capital projects in Cork city and County currently underway, in planning, design phase."

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Assistant National Director was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan asked whether there is a HSE Estates Masterfile Database for capital projects and if so whether he could have access to it. It was agreed to request HSE Estates to present at an upcoming South West Committee meeting.

(b) Cllr. Norma Moriarty put forward the following question:

"Can we please have an update on progress being made on securing a location and agreements for an additional ambulance base in Killorglin to help cover the Mid and South Kerry area more effectively?"

A written response from Mr Rob Moriarty, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty thanked NAS for the reply and asked further in relation to proposal and a Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV). Mr Rob Moriarty outlined that a RRV vehicle has been secured by NAS. He stated that whilst there have been discussions with the Defence Forces – there need to be Estates involvement to progress this proposed arrangement.

(c) Cllr. Mikey Sheehy put forward the following question:

"Following the recent launch and publication of the pharmacy task force report where the role of the community pharmacy is proposed to be greatly enhanced in the provision of primary care. What supports are the HSE giving to assist in the delivery of the task force recommendations."

A written response from Mr Pat Healy, National Director for National Services and Schemes was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehy acknowledged this written response. However he highlighted the need to alleviate pressures on GP Services. Cllr Sheehy referenced the role of community pharmacists providing the Minor Ailment Scheme instead of General Practitioners. The role of community pharmacy has been expanding and increasing in recent years. Community Pharmacists have a high level of expertise and training which was demonstrated throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Cllr Sheehy would like to see specific recommendations and actions from this Taskforce vis a vis the Community

Pharmacist role and Schemes and would welcome further information when available.

(d) Cllr. Danny Collins put forward the following question:

"Are the HSE getting updates from the receiver who recently took over Aperee Nursing Home in Bantry? It's vital that this stays as a nursing home for years to come and as if it doesn't it will cause extra strains on Bantry General Hospital."

A written response from Ms Tess O'Donovan, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Collins noted reply, however he stated that this nursing home needs to remain open for the sake of the 28 residents and to alleviate pressures on Bantry General Hospital. The population is aging and there is a shortage of nursing-home beds in the country. Tess O' Donovan Chief Officer outlined that this is a private nursing home and that the HSE has no governance or remit over any private nursing homes registered with HIQA. The Receiver is in direct contact with the Regulatory Body HIQA.

Ms O'Donovan stated that there are a number of private nursing homes in similar circumstances across the country and that these are very serious matters. She acknowledged that that this is a most difficult process for everyone and most especially for residents and their families. The HSE is working to open as much public bed capacity as possible. Ms O'Donovan agreed to take Cllr Collins's concerns and information to the appropriate Management.

7. Date and Time of next meeting – 27th of February 2025. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork.