



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM, SOUTH

FINAL REPORT 2025

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 Final Report for 2025 which outlines the activities of the Forum from 1st of January 2025 to 30th of June 2025. This 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 to in 2025.

**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

Ann Bambury

Danny Collins

Caroline Cronin

Dominic Finn

Finbarr Harrington

Pat Hayes

Mary Linehan Foley

Tony O'Shea

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

John O'Leary

John Pratt

Adam Wyse

Wexford County Council

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. Four Meetings were held in 2025 before the establishment of the new 6 Forums. The dates were as follows:

- Thursday 27th February 2025
- Thursday 27th March 2025
- Thursday 1st May 2025
- Thursday 5th June 2025

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

IHA Manager Waterford/Wexford
IHA Manager Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
IHA Manager Kerry
IHA Manager Cork South and West
IHA Manager Cork North and East
Director of Public Affairs and Communications

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 following Committee meetings were held in 2025 before the establishment of the new 6 Forums. The dates were as follows:

:

Tuesday 21 st January 2025	South East – Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny
Thursday January	South West – Westgate, Ballincollig
Tuesday 8 th April 2025	South East – Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny
Thursday 10 th April 2025	South West – Manor West Hotel, Tralee, Co Kerry

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 2025 43 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 2025, Regional Health Forum South Members submitted 38 Questions.

Presentations

The following presentations were delivered to the Forum Members:-

- Presentation from Estates Department. South East and South West
- Update on flu/Respiratory Diseases
- Presentation on Suicide Prevention
- Presentation on Self Management with Chronic Disease
- Presentation on Integrated Health Areas

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING February 2025

MOTIONS

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

“The length of time it takes for someone to get through to the local Caredoc. This was an issue over the Christmas Period. Apparently, it is a centralised system with over 20 taking calls not fit for purpose.”

Cllr Fergal Browne

Caredoc is an out-of-hours GP service that provides medical care when General Practitioner surgeries are closed. It is important to understand that Caredoc is not a substitute for the 999/112 emergency services. In the event of the 999/112 emergency services requiring General Practitioner support at a location, the National Ambulance Services (NAS) have a direct line to Caredoc to facilitate a prompt response.

Caredoc fully acknowledges that wait times can be frustrating, particularly during peak activity hours over Christmas and New Year, when demands are at their highest. According to the most recent statistics published by the Health Surveillance Unit of the HSE, the 2024/25 Christmas and New Year period saw the highest recorded level of influenza notifications during Week 52 (2024) and Week 1 (2025).

The Caredoc centralised model is designed to ensure that all calls are managed as efficiently as possible. Over the two busiest weeks on record, HSE data for Christmas and New Year Surge Period Week 52 (2024) and Week 1 (2025) demonstrates that 28.33 patients per 1,000 of population accessed the CareDoc service in the South East as against a national average of 18.03 per 1,000 population.

National GP Out of Hours Services and data

The HSE Winter Surge Data for national GP out-of-hours services indicates a 30.4% increase in patient contacts nationally during the 2024/2025 two-week holiday period compared to last year. This reflects a significant surge in morbidity and acute illnesses countrywide during this time.

Metric	Week 52 (2023) Week 1 (2024)	Week 52 (2024) Week 1 (2025)
Total GP Out-	66,880	87,198

of-Hours Contacts

ED Referrals	7,551	8,451
ED Referral Rate	11.2%	10.5%

The Caredoc out-of-hours service across both IHAs in the South East demonstrated a 34% increase in patient contacts during the 2024/2025 two-week holiday period which is in line with the national morbidity trends.

During the two-week Christmas and New Year period, Caredoc deployed 1,599 hours of call-taking and call-taking supervision. The goal is to ensure that every patient requiring a General Practitioner consultation receives an appointment on the same day.

Caredoc continuously strives to reduce response times through the deployment of the most advanced telephony and computer technology to support our professional call-taking personnel. However, it is important to acknowledge that extremely high demand during peak hours does result in longer wait times and that is why we remain committed to ongoing process improvements to enhance efficiency.

It is also important to note that the Caredoc call assessment centre and services remained fully operational throughout the recent adverse weather conditions, firstly with the heavy snowfall and ice which lasted several days where staff went beyond the call of duty to arrive to work and many extending their hours of work to facilitate our patients and services. During Storm Eowyn, the Caredoc management team put their emergency plan in place and ensured that Caredoc services remained operational. All staff were in place before the red alert period and remained on duty until the red alert was lifted to support their colleagues and ensure the public had access to medical care throughout this challenging period.

Finally, Caredoc has been at the forefront of integrated healthcare for over 26 years. The Caredoc model encompasses out-of-hours General Practitioner services, Community Intervention Team services, remote patient, and chronic disease management. Caredoc has successfully integrated and collaborated seamlessly with general practice, acute hospitals, HSE-integrated teams, and chronic disease hubs. This model of care has been recognised internationally and is featured by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in its Compendium of Initiatives for future primary healthcare integrated care delivery.

It is important for Caredoc to review all feedback and therefore if there are specific concerns, individuals are encouraged to make contact so that they may address them as appropriate.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

“Primary Care Centre developments in Kilkenny City and County”

Cllr Pat Dunphy

In recent years there have been a number of Primary Care Centre development across the South East including Newpark Primary Care Centre (Kilkenny city) and Thomastown Primary Care Centre (County).

Graiguenamanagh

The Primary Care Centre in Graiguenamanagh will be delivered via the HSE operational lease mechanism. Following a process where submissions were requested from developers for the development of a Primary Care Centre in the area, a preferred solution was identified and, following approval by the Board of the HSE, a Letter of Intent issued to the developer.

It is anticipated an application for planning permission for the Primary Care Centre in Graiguenamanagh will be lodged by the developer in Quarter 2 2025.

Following approval of the relevant statutory procedures (including planning permission, fire safety certificate, and disability access cert) the developer will issue a construction programme which will outline target dates, including commencement of construction works on site.

The Primary Care Centre facility in Graiguenamanagh will represent the focal point for the provision of all primary, community and continuing care services in the area. It will enable greater integration amongst teams and enhance service delivery for the future.

Urlingford

The need for a new Primary Care Centre in Urlingford had been identified previously. A selection process had been undertaken, and a Preferred Provider had been selected. Unfortunately, the selected Preferred Provider encountered difficulties regarding the economic viability of the proposed project. The HSE recently withdrawn from that process.

To facilitate a re-advertisement of this Primary Care Centre in Urlingford, a full review of the current and future service needs for the area is being undertaken

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with relevant stakeholders and a scope is being identified based on the updated service requirements.

The HSE will advertise Urlingford Primary Care Centre on the E-tenders Procurement Platform with a Prior Information Notice (PIN). The PIN will seek expressions of interest from interested parties, to enter into the two-step procurement process, in delivering a Primary Care Centre via the HSE's Operational Lease.

Following the mandatory waiting period between the PIN and the two-step procurement process, the next stage of the advertisement will then be published on the E-Tenders Procurement Platform.

The delivery of a primary care centre is dependent on a number of factors such as availability and suitability of site location with good accessibility, level of GP involvement, service level agreement, commercial rates for rent and service charge, planning permission status on proposal and perceived deliverability of the proposal. It is anticipated that new submissions will reflect current market conditions and will address any affordability concerns. All selected proposals are subject to the normal HSE approval processes and will be rigorously examined in relation to all aspects including whether it represents value for money to the HSE.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE provide a list of existing step down services with particular reference to Carlow / Kilkenny area?"

Cllr John Coonan

The HSE provides a broad range of services for older people in our community, including in-patient acute services, step down and convalescent care, day services, rehabilitation, community services, home care and home helps.

South East Community Healthcare provides short stay (step-down facilities) for patients who following discharge from acute hospital may require a further period of convalescence before being discharged home or being identified as requiring a long stay bed in residential care. Short stay includes step-up, step-down care, intermediate care, rehabilitation and respite care comprised of a mixture of the following categories: palliative (Level 2), respite, rehabilitation, convalescent, dementia respite, assessment beds and transitional care beds. Short stay beds offer convalescence and rehabilitation services that support people's transition back home.

HSE Carlow / Kilkenny Short Stay (Step-down) Beds

Sacred Heart Hospital, Carlow	Rehabilitation Beds	12
	Dementia Specific Respite	2
	Assessment Beds with therapies - part of the rehabilitation complement	2
	TOTAL	16
Carlow District Hospital	Respite Beds	7
	Palliative Care Beds	4
	Transitional care beds	6
	TOTAL	17
St Columbas	Rehabilitation Beds	10

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Hospital, Thomastown		
	Dementia Specific Respite	1
	TOTAL	11
Castlecomer District Hospital	Respite Beds	8
	Palliative Care	2
	Transitional care Beds	8
	TOTAL	18
Carlow / Kilkenny		62

*These beds can be interchangeable depending on the priority of need at any given time. The above figures are inclusive of Respite Beds which are generally offered to those within the Community. Respite care is an essential component to ensure older people with care needs in the home, including those with dementia, can be cared for in the community. Respite beds offer additional assistance to families and carers thus helping to alleviate the ongoing stress associated with providing care. The provision of respite can often assist with avoidable acute hospital admissions. Across Carlow/Kilkenny Services for Older People short-stay and respite services continued to be optimised throughout the year and indeed winter to support acute hospitals in reducing overall length of stay (LoS) for older people. Available capacity is also used to facilitate Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP) teams deliver admission avoidance initiatives. In addition there are 5 x Private Nursing Homes beds in Kilkenny funded as part of the winter initiative to support acute services to reduce length of stay.

Acute Hospital Services in Kilkenny have advised that they may avail (on an ad hoc basis) of private hospital provider beds where necessary.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE establish an interim physiotherapy unit in East Cork until a permanent location is in place to accommodate the greater population east of Dunkettle."

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern

Community Health Network (CHN) 6 covers the Midleton and Youghal region and serves a population of over 45,000 people. CHN 6 is awaiting the completion of two Primary Care Centres (PCC), one located in Youghal and the other located in Midleton, to be delivered by developers in a public private partnership. Youghal PCC has been granted full planning permission and building is expected to commence in the coming weeks. We also anticipate full planning permission for Midleton PCC to be granted shortly.

There is a fully operational physiotherapy gym and clinical area in St. Raphael's Centre, Youghal, which was repurposed in 2023 by the CHN manager as an interim solution, providing clinical space whilst we await the new primary care centre. There is adequate space for 3 physiotherapists to work in this space. It currently operates outpatient clinics.

Paediatric clients are being assessed and treated in both the Youghal Health Centre and Carrigtwohill Primary Care Centre offering clinic options at either side of the CHN 6 catchment area.

The Old Cloyne Health Centre has been newly refurbished and will be operational to physiotherapy clinics in the next couple of weeks to service the south of CHN 6.

Midleton Community Hospital has a shared clinical room being utilised by physiotherapy services on Thursday and Friday.

CHN 6 physiotherapists also utilise the Carrigtwohill Primary Care Centre, accessible by bus and is facilitating outpatient appointments.

CHN 6 physiotherapists are providing an extensive domiciliary service in the absence of clinical space in Midleton.

We will be utilising local community centres and sports facilities in Midleton to provide our group interventions, including back care programmes and exercise classes, for people with a history of falls. Using these centres gives a high patient satisfaction rating as there is always ample parking, they are easily accessible and in line with Sláintecare it brings the intervention into the patient's community

A request has been made to express interest in the front block of Midleton Community Hospital for physiotherapy clinic space when it is vacated until the new primary care centre is developed.

JULE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

“That this Forum calls for the standalone Chemotherapy Unit at University Hospital Kerry to be added to the HSE’s priority capital list. If a new capital submission is required, this should be prepared as a matter of urgency, in light of the considerable time that has elapsed since the project was first initiated.”

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Capital and Estates have commenced a revision of the capital application, based on an update of the stage 1 design report, and funding to proceed to stage 2 design will be included in the capital plan for 2025, the revised capital submission will be End Q1 2025 to National Capital and Property Steering Group.

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director of Estates
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE provide an update on the Medical Centre in Lehenaghmore, Cork."

ClIr Fiona Kerins

The HSE wish to confirm that a Letter of Intent has been issued.

Layouts being developed.

Planning in discussion with Cork City Council have taken place. Site has been re-zoned. The HSE are engaging with landlord's architect to conclude on layouts. Planning permission was lodged in Q4 2021, planning application was subject to further Information, information has been returned, planning permission granted end of August 2022.

The HSE has been in communication with the Developer regarding the status of the development.

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director of Estates
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

“That the HSE would outline their plans for the HSE building located on O’Brien Street, Mallow.”

Cllr Tony O’Shea

The property is currently vacant. The HSE Property Protocol and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform Circular 11/2015, where the property will be offered the property to all State Stakeholders through the Intra-State Property Register. Cork County Council can express an interest in acquiring the property at market value if so required.

If no interest is expressed in the property by any State Stakeholder, the HSE will then progress the disposal of the property on the open market in line with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform Circular 17/2016 and the HSE Property Protocol.

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director of Estates
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(h) on Agenda refers:

"That this Forum supports the urgent introduction of school therapists to all special schools in the Cork/Kerry area in a way that does not take from existing CDNT staff complements, in a time sensitive manner and further seeks the attendance of the Ministers for disability at the next forum to engage with Forum members on funding lines required to support such therapy supports for children in the Cork/Kerry area."

Cllr Peter Horgan

Special Schools:

10% of children with complex disability needs attend special schools. The other 90% attend mainstream school or some don't attend school. The children attending special schools may have complex learning needs but not necessarily complex health needs.

Six special schools in Cork have been included in a national pilot programme to provide occupational therapy, speech & language therapy and behaviour supports on-site in special schools. These supports are being delivered collaboratively by Children's Disability Network Teams and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Additional occupational therapy and speech and language therapy posts were allocated to our CDNTs to allow them to deliver on-site therapies as required by Government. Behaviour supports are provided by the NCSE. Furthermore, special schools access psychology supports via the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS).

HSE South West and its lead agency partners are committed to participation in this pilot programme and is represented on the national steering group by Angela O'Neill (Head of Disability Services).

As set out in the 2025 Programme for Government, Government has committed to creating a dedicated National Therapy Service in Education, beginning with special schools. The HSE both regionally and nationally is committed to working with colleagues in the Department of Education and Department of Children, Disability & Equality to progress this priority action.

**JULIE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(i) on Agenda refers:

"To request an update on mental health supports in the Carlow/Kilkenny Area."

Cllr. Daniel Pender

In Carlow Kilkenny Mental Health Services there are two Approved Centres (inpatient admission units) providing services to the population of Carlow/Kilkenny. The 44 bed Acute Inpatient Unit (Department of Psychiatry) is located on the campus of St. Luke's General Hospital Kilkenny. St Gabriel's Unit (Psychiatry of Later Life) is located on the campus of St. Canice's Hospital. Across the geographic area of Carlow and Kilkenny there are five General Adult Community Mental Health teams, two Child and Adolescent Mental Health teams, two Psychiatry of Later Life teams and one Rehabilitation and Recovery team. There are two day hospitals one located within St. Dymphna's Hospital (Carlow) and one located in Newpark Primary Care Centre (Kilkenny). Within Carlow there are three high support, one medium support and two low support community residences while Kilkenny has five high support and five low support community residences. There is on-going review of community residences to ensure properties are meeting the needs of clients.

There are Home Based Treatment Teams in both areas along with client based training services.

The following capital development projects are at planning stage: a new 60 bed Acute Psychiatric Unit in Kilkenny, accommodation for an Eating Disorder Team, Kilkenny and a new CAMHS facility. Whilst these developments will be located within one geographic area, however, they will provide services and further enhance mental health services in both Carlow and Kilkenny with increased capacity for inpatient care and referrals to the Eating Disorder team open to both Carlow and Kilkenny. There are also ongoing upgrade works to the TASK Recovery Hub Kilkenny.

In addition the South East Recovery College provides recovery orientated educational courses and workshops for people who experience mental health challenges, psychological distress, addiction and other challenges. Programmes, courses and workshops are offered across the counties of the South East.

There is a Clinical Nurse Specialist for Traveller Mental Health Liaison for Carlow and Kilkenny. This post provides clinical support to service users bridging the gap for those not engaged in acute mental health services. In June 2024 the Carlow Community Response Plan was activated to respond to the psychological distress in the Carlow Traveller Community who experienced tragic events in their community.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(j) on Agenda refers:

"To ask the HSE to review the situation where a person applying for Home help hours in the South West area can avail of same for personal care hours as opposed to light house work or food preparation. In a lot of cases elderly people are not taking up on these hours as they are uncomfortable with a non-family members providing personal care but would really appreciate help in other areas."

Cllr Margaret McDonnell

Provision of Home Support is a core service for older people and their families and is essential in supporting older people to continue to live within their communities. Access to home support is based on clinical assessment of the person's needs by the HSE, having regard to available resources and competing demands for the services from those people with assessed needs. As the population aged over 65 continues to grow, the demand for new home care supports is increasing and as those already in receipt of services become more dependent, demand for additional supports for existing clients is also increasing. No means test is applied and clients are currently not required to pay any charge or contribution towards the HSE funded Home Support Service.

Following assessment, the nursing care plan outlines the needs of the client, and it is this which determines what service each client receives within the limits of the staff resources available. Our service delivery guidelines are centered on assisting clients with everyday personal care tasks. Home support is not intended, nor would it be possible within resources available, to replace informal care arrangements but rather the intent is to support valuable informal care arrangements.

Currently, a wide range of tasks are carried out by our Home Support Health Care Assistants (HCAs) as determined by the client's care plan, including assistance with personal care tasks (getting in and out of bed, showering, shaving), cleaning of a client's personal space where non-performance of such duties impacts on the health, safety and well-being of the individual, reminding clients to take their medication etc. We want our clients to get the type of care that they need: enough care to meet their needs, confidence that the care they are getting is high-quality and safe and assurance that care is being allocated equitably. The resources available are distributed to benefit the maximum

Regional Health Forum South

number of people and provide the most appropriate supports required by our clients.

Given the increasing demand for personal care assistance and the recruitment challenges we are dealing with on an ongoing basis, the HSE's Home Support service's goal is to try and reduce our waiting lists so that as many people as possible needing personal care support can access our services, within available capacity. Against this background, we do not have the capacity to deliver support outside of the service delivery guidelines outlined above. If a client declines prescribed support with personal care tasks, then we are obliged to ensure that it is allocated to another client who is waitlisted for same. Other supports and services for older people exist throughout the region which may be of assistance and if required, a referral for same can be arranged through a client's GP or local Public Health Nurse/Community Nurse.

Our overall emphasis is on promoting a high quality home support service, delivered to those who require it, in the most appropriate setting. High quality health & social services for older people provide continuity of care, integrated between care settings. The ultimate goal is to facilitate the older person to lead a healthy and independent life, with dignity, at home in the community.

JULIE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(k) on Agenda refers:

"That a Crisis Team be established for Kerry as it is an area with very poor access to crisis mental health services and it requires the CT approach to be able to provide an effective service."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Mental Health Services in the HSE South West are committed to meeting the mental health needs of the population we serve. As a service we recognize the demand for crisis responsiveness to acute mental ill health presentations especially out of the 9am to 5pm working hours. To this end the service has funded four crisis nurses in the county.

Recognising the need to address the service gap of out of hours provision for those individuals presenting with a mental health crisis, Kerry Mental Health Services submitted a comprehensive business case to the National Clinical Care Programme to establish a full Crisis Resolution Team in Kerry in 2024. Unfortunately, we have received confirmation that there is no funding for the establishment of this multidisciplinary team for 2025. We have been advised to resubmit our business case for 2026 and our intention is to resubmit our funding request for a Crisis Resolution Team for the county.

At this time Kerry Mental Health Services have been approved in principle to recruit to a Clinical Nurse Specialist Crisis Nurse post. This post is at senior management approvals stage and we intend to recruit to the post in the coming weeks.

JULIE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(I) on Agenda refers:

"What is the HSEs plan for both the District Hospital and Columbanus in Killarney when the new Community Hospital will open?"

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

Three Clinical Nursing Units (CNUs) in the HSE South West region are included in a national single bundle of CNUs to be developed by Public Private Partnership (PPP). One of these CNUs will be located in Killarney. The new Killarney CNU will replace the current services provided in St Columbanus Home and the District Hospital (Rehab Unit). The new Killarney CNU is being built in the grounds of the old St Finan's Hospital in Killarney. When completed, the residents and staff from St. Columbanus will transfer to Killarney CNU. Work on this new unit is progressing well and it is anticipated that the unit will open in Q4 2025.

Works will then commence on site to develop the Killarney Injury unit.

The new Minor Injury Unit which is planned for the Kerry area will be located in the grounds of St Columbanus Home. When the new Killarney CNU is completed and the residents and staff have transferred. Works will then commence on site to develop the Minor Injury Unit.

As you will be aware, the HSE is currently transitioning to the new health regions structure and the agreed new structures will come into operation on 3 March 2025. On that date I will take up the role of Integrated Healthcare Area (IHA) Manager for the Kerry area. As part of the lead in to my new role I have established a Kerry Accommodation Integrated Working Group. This group will support the decision making process around staff and service accommodation across the Kerry Integrated Healthcare Area. As part of its brief the group is reviewing health service accommodation needs in the greater Killarney area and this work will inform any decision on the future use of the remaining available space on the Killarney Community Hospital / St. Columbanus campus.

JULIE O'NEILL

CHIEF OFFICER

CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(m) on Agenda refers:

"While I welcome and sincerely thank you for all the services being provided in the Cobh Primary Care Centre, can I ask for the provision of an Antenatal Clinic (outreach clinic from CUMH) to be considered and provided in the centre due to the growing population in Cobh, and also to make it much easier for patients to access, rather than having to travel out of town."

Cllr Dominic Finn

At this time, there are no plans to establish an antenatal outreach clinic from Cork University Maternity Hospital in Cobh. However, we are continually reviewing the needs of the community and appreciate feedback as it helps inform future planning.

Currently, the Carrigtwohill Women's and Infants Health Hubs serve the wider region of East Cork, and we encourage patients to access these services.

Adrian Bradley
General Manager
Cork University Maternity Hospital

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"To ask if the HSE plan to have a treatment Centre for addicts in County Carlow and if not how can other groups go about setting up one?"

Cllr Fergal Browne

The HSE currently provide community based addiction services within the Carlow area for people and their families experiencing Drug and Alcohol related issues. This service is based on the grounds of St. Dymphna's Hospital campus.

There are a wide range of Services provided by Carlow Substance Misuse Team (Monday to Friday unless otherwise indicated) as follows:

- **Counselling Services**
Counselling services are provided for adults, adolescents, concerned persons either one to one, family, couples and groups.
- **Referral to Residential Treatment / Detox**
- **Outreach / Community based Drug Workers**
 - Outreach to chaotic substance misuse clients to support them to access services
 - Community Drug Worker: based in youth service offering support to young people and families.
 - Meeting clients who are not accessing mainstream services
 - Harm Reduction Interventions
 - Back pack needle exchange programme
- **Nursing Services**
- **Interagency Working**
- **Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT)** by Nurse and GP (Wednesday & Friday)
- **Group Work:**
 - SMART Group - Tuesdays 2 p.m.
 - Art Therapy - Thursday 10.30 a.m.
 - Drop in service - Thursday 2pm -3 p.m.
 - Out of Hours Service - every second Thursday 5-8 p.m.

In addition the HSE also fund through a Service Level Arrangement in Merchants Quay Ireland "St Francis Farm" residential treatment centre in Tullow Co. Carlow. St Francis Farm has 8 detox beds and 13 rehabilitation beds aimed at providing training / rehabilitation in a rural setting to former long-term drug users with an aftercare programme.

The HSE funds other Tier 4 residential treatment services in the South East which can also be assessed by people living in the Carlow area.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE provide an update on its policies and procedures regarding the repurchasing and reuse of aids and appliances within our services?"

Cllr John Coonan

The HSE established a Framework Agreement to provide a Managed Service for Patient Aids & Appliances. This service comprises the management of the distribution and retrieval of Appliances to/from the clients including Cleaning/Disinfecting appliances returned from the clients as required.

To increase community aids and appliance recycling to the greatest extent possible HSE Management Team decided that no new community aids and appliances can be purchased if suitable surplus stock exists anywhere in the system i.e. the principle of universal ownership has been agreed.

It is HSE policy to recycle community aids and appliances where economically feasible.

Service Level agreement specification outlined below:

The successful Service Provider will constitute the primary interface between HSE and its relevant patients / Service Users. In that context attention to detail, service efficiency / efficacy, safety-assurance, professional courtesy and customer service are mandatory requirements from the Service Provider:

The proposed service will encompass the following tasks:

- Logistics - Transport & Warehousing
- Decontamination & Presentation
- Maintenance Repair, Refurbishment
- Asset Management, Stock Control, On Line Requisitioning & Reporting provided by the Asset Tracker Solutions Ltd "AssetTrak" System
- Disposal of Obsolete Appliances

The service required can vary from area to area and can be any one of the above up to a fully managed service including all of the above elements.

Applications for Aids and Appliances - Community

Applications for aids and appliances within South East Primary Care Community Services are processed through the Resource Allocation Group (RAG). Procedures are as follows:

1. The HSE prescriber clinically assesses the service user and the necessary documentation is completed, i.e. RAG application form.
2. Prescriber must first check with CAMS (Central Asset Management Service) to see if the specialised non stock product is available. (The Central Asset Management Service receive used stock which they clean, recycle, re-set and reuse if suitable to do so)
3. If the non-stock product is available from CAMS the item can be utilised without further submission to RAG.
4. If not available through CAMS the prescriber seeks a 3 quotes from the framework suppliers and an application is submitted to the RAG.
5. Once the RAG application has been approved the RAG administrator will forward the requisition form to the Central Processing Unit for ordering.
6. The prescriber will be informed of the outcome of the RAG meeting.
7. The prescribers (excluding PHN) of the Aids & Appliances are responsible for the fitting and provision of the device.
8. Equipment approved for provision by the Public Health Nurse is delivered directly to the patient by HSE logistics or a private supplier.
9. The PHN service will examine the appropriateness and functionality of the equipment on every subsequent encounter with the patient.
10. The prescriber remains the key contact in the event of the device requiring adjustment, repair or replacement.

*Please note there may be some operational differences between the areas due to variances in the provision of the services.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on agenda refers:

“What is the current status of the rollout of Integrated Healthcare Areas (IHAs) for HSE South West area, and when is it expected that they will be fully finalised and implemented?”

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

On March 3, 2025 Cork Kerry Community Healthcare and South/South West Hospital Group become one system. This integrated health region will be called: HSE South West is made up of three Integrated Health Areas: Cork North and East, Cork South and West, and Kerry. HSE South West services will deliver Sláintecare providing everyone with the right care, in the right place, at the right time. As Regional Executive Officer (REO) for the HSE South West I will be accountable and responsible for the operational service delivery in the Cork and Kerry region. From March 3rd, operational responsibility for our services will transfer to our three Integrated Healthcare Area Managers, Sonya Cotter (interim manager for Cork North and East); Priscilla Lynch (manager for Cork South and West) and Julie O'Neill (manager for Kerry).

The new health region structures will support and strengthen integrated healthcare. This includes integration between:

- primary care and community services, including GPs, pharmacies and voluntary organisations
- acute hospitals and community services
- the HSE and wider public service organisations, such as local authorities

The HSE South West Regional Executive Management Team (REMT) will be made up of:

- Regional Executive – Dr. Andy Philips
- IHA Manager, Cork South and West – Priscilla Lynch
- IHA Manager (Interim), Cork North and East – Sonya Cotter
- IHA Manager, Kerry – Julie O'Neill
- Regional Clinical Director – Prof. Peter Kearney
- Regional Director of Nursing and Midwifery – Prof. Bridie O'Sullivan
- Regional Director of Finance – Dr Ger O'Callaghan
- Regional Director People – Deborah Harrington
- Regional Director, Population and Public Health – Dr Anne Sheahan
- Regional Lead, Estates – Daniel Clifford
- Regional Ambulance Lead, Rob Moriarty
- Regional Director, Communications and Public Affairs – Jonathan Hoare
- Regional Director, Technology and Transformation – TBC

Regional Health Forum South

- Regional Director, Planning and Performance – TBC
- Regional Disability Lead - TBC

The three IHA Managers will attend the next Regional Health Forum South West Committee meeting on April 10th to introduce themselves to the members, brief them on the delivery of services under the new structures and to answer any questions which the members may have.

JULIE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

“When will weekend emergency cardiac care services, i.e. (Saturday/Sunday, 8am-8pm) commence at UHW?”

Cllr Declan Barry

University Hospital Waterford currently provide an 8am-8pm Monday to Friday on call STEMI service to patients of the South East and diagnostic services through the second Cath Lab 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday.

University Hospital Waterford deliver outpatient and inpatient services both to patients of UHW but also other hospitals across the South East.

UHW was recently funded and approved to increase the on-call STEMI service to 7 days 8am to 8pm, after a successful recruitment campaign and discussions with the clinical teams the 7 day service provisionally scheduled for the 18th March 2025.

Dr Sinead Renyolds
IHA Manager
Waterford/Wexford

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(e) on agenda refers:

"To ask the HSE what would be the process to transfer the employment of all Section 39/38 therapists in the South/South West area to become employees of the HSE, and if there has ever been a cost compiler or associated with such a process."

Cllr Peter Horgan

A wide range of health and social care services are delivered on behalf of the HSE by providers in the Section 38, Section 39 and for profit sectors. In a competitive recruitment market, many therapists chose to work in the Section 38, Section 39 or for profit sector. As set out in the Health Act, staff employed in Section 38 providers access the same terms and conditions of employment as those in the HSE. These staff are also included in the HSE's WTE census.

Staff employed in the Section 39 sector do not access public sector terms and conditions of employment. This matter is a subject of on-going engagement between staff representative bodies and Government representatives.

The HSE is not aware of any proposal to transfer therapy posts from the Section 38 or Section 39 sector to the direct employment of the HSE.

The complexity arising from separate governance arrangements and structures of the respective Sections 38/39 *vis a vis* the HSE would need to be acknowledged as would the terms of the employee contract, salary scales; pension scheme of the respective agencies providers not currently encompassed by the HSE.

If a transfer of services were to take place from an employer perspective such transfer would be informed by the following;

- T.U.P.E. (Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings
- Employees (Provision of Information and Consultation) Act 2006.
- Public Service Agreement (The PSA) applicable for the Sections 38 agencies and employers.

JULIE O'NEILL

CHIEF OFFICER

CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(f) on Agenda refers:

“To ask for the plans and timeline in relation to Glanmire Primary Care Centre?”

Cllr Margaret McDonnell

The HSE wish to state that the developer is to lodge an appeal to An Bord Pleanala. The HSE has requested a copy of the Developer drawings and when made available will forward on same.

It is envisaged the Centre will be operational in Q1, 2028.

Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director of Estates
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(g) on Agenda refers:

“When is the new Ophthalmologist going to be appointed in Clonmel?”

Cllr John O’ Leary

The Community Ophthalmologist Physician (COP) Post became vacant on following a retirement on the 6th October 2025.

An application to fill the post of Community Ophthalmologist was completed and submitted in line with HSE recruitment policy. In line with National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology Model of Eye Care 2016 and the Modernised Eye Care Pathway - the Community Ophthalmologist Physician position is being regraded to the position of Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist.

This process is underway in association with the National Clinical Lead for Ophthalmology and for onward submission to the Consultant Application Advisory Committee.

The HSE acknowledges the impact on service users (for both children and adults). In the meantime whilst this recruitment process is ongoing, the HSE is exploring all options to enable ophthalmology services to resume on an interim level in Tipperary South.

For urgent eye care issues, patients from the South Tipperary area may be referred to the Eye Service via the Emergency Department pathway at University Hospital Waterford by their General Practitioner.

Roseanne Killeen
IHA Manager
Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(h) on Agenda refers:

“When did the clinical pathways regarding ADHD treatment change in the South Tipperary area and what plans, if any, are in place to provide an ADHD clinic in the South Tipperary catchment area? Are there any financial supports in place to help people pay for private assessments?”

Cllr Marie Murphy

Adults

This National Clinical Programme (NCP) applies to adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is a common neuro-developmental disorder with 3 core symptoms (inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity). The Programme is delivered as part of the HSE’s mental health service provision and across government departments to ensure a holistic, integrated, person-centred response to adults with ADHD. It includes both assessment and treatment of the disorder and works collaboratively with voluntary agencies. Access to appropriate intervention and treatment has been shown to significantly improve outcomes for this patient population. ADHD is a common childhood disorder with high rates of continuation of ADHD symptoms into adulthood. Prior to the development of the National Clinical Programme there were no specific ADHD public services available for Adults in Ireland.

Funding was provided nationally for the phased roll out of specialist community Adult ADHD teams across the country. I can confirm approval has recently been granted under the clinical programme for the development of an Adult ADHD team for Integrated Health Areas of Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South and Waterford Wexford. It is planned for the team to be established by Quarter 3, 2025 subject to a successful recruitment process.

This is a positive step forward in developing Adult ADHD services in the area, and we look forward to collaborating with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the programme.

Children

The appropriate pathway through the HSE for a child to receive an ADHD treatment is a referral through the young person’s General Practitioner/Consultant Paediatrician to CAMHS. Once a referral is received the multidisciplinary team will triage the referral and process accordingly, however there are waiting lists for ADHD assessments. CAMHS teams in South Tipperary actively review waiting lists and make every effort to ensure that children are seen and assessed in as timely a manner as possible.

Unfortunately Mental Health Services do not have any financial supports to assist with private assessments.

Roseanne Killeen

IHA Manager

Kilkenny/Carlow and South Tipperary

Regional Health Forum South

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(i) on agenda refers:

"Can we please have an update on exactly where we are with the recruitment of the clinical nurse specialist / crisis intervention nurse for the Iveragh area?"

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Mental Health Services South West are committed to meeting the mental health needs of the population we serve. As a service we recognise the demand for crisis responsiveness to acute mental ill health presentations especially out of the 9am to 5pm working hours. To this end the service has funded four crisis nurses in the county.

Recognising the need to address the service gap of out of hours provision for those individuals presenting with a mental health crisis, Kerry Mental Health Services submitted a comprehensive business case to the National Clinical Care Programme to establish a full Crisis Resolution Team in Kerry in 2024. Unfortunately, we have received confirmation that there is no funding for the establishment of this multidisciplinary team for 2025. We have been advised to resubmit our business case for 2026 and our intention is to resubmit our funding request for a Crisis Resolution Team for the county.

At this time Kerry Mental Health Services have been approved in principle to recruit to a Clinical Nurse Specialist Crisis Nurse post. This post is at senior management approvals stage and we intend to recruit to the post in the coming weeks.

**JULIE O'NEILL
CHIEF OFFICER
CORK KERRY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th February 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(j) on Agenda refers:

"How many Consultants are on duty in University Hospital Kerry on the weekend?"

Cllr Jackie Healy Rae

Consultants are on call for all specialties at weekends. The following is a list of those Consultants on call each weekend:

- Medicine X 1 with an additional medical Consultant based in ED also
- Surgery x1
- Orthopaedic x1
- ED x1
- Anaesthetics x1
- Paeds x1
- Obs /Gynae x1

For the January and February, in addition to this, there are additional Medical Consultants in place to cover the following:

- AMAU x1
- Medical floors x2

Mary Fitzgerald
General Manager
University Hospital Kerry

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
27th March 2025

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

"To seek the breakdown of Resource Allocation Group applications for all CHOs and LHOs covering the HSE South West along with payments made for 2024 and 2025 year to date and the amount of applications outstanding or awaiting payment, in tabular form"

Cllr Peter Horgan

In relation to the Motion regarding breakdown of Resource Allocation Group applications and payments for 2024 and 2025 to date.

RAG Groups Cork & Kerry Total	Total Approvals Jan - Dec 2024	Total No. of Applications Jan - Dec 2024	Total Approvals 2025 to date	Total No. of Applications 2025 to date
	€ 11,038,324	5303	€ 2,323,383	1043

Please note there is no waiting list currently for aids and appliances.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"For the HSE to provide an update on the number of staff vacancies in CDNT in Carlow/Kilkenny and the same figure for the previous year."

Cllr. Daniel Pender

Response from IHA Carlow/Kilkenny Disability Services

Three Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) are aligned to Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across IHA Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

The model of service for all CDNTs is family-centred and based on the needs of the child. This includes universal, targeted and specialised supports and interventions, as appropriate to the individual child and family. It is based on the objectives of empowering and supporting parents and others who are with the child on a daily basis to facilitate the child's developmental needs.

The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow. However, there are significant challenges for CDNTs including:

- Growth in numbers of children with complex need
- Growth in demand for Assessment / Assessment of Need, diverting further resources away from interventions
- Significant staffing vacancies

The national HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 - 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People, launched in October 2023, now in implementation phase, is a targeted Service Improvement Programme to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for all children with complex needs as a result of a disability and their families. The Roadmap, includes a suite of 60 actions, including CDNT Retention and Recruitment targets, and many of which are now in train.

There are currently 9.50 WTE vacancies in CDNT - Network 1 Carlow compared to 8 WTE vacancies in 2024. CDNT Network 1 Carlow have recruited the following posts in the past year:

- Senior Occupational Therapist
- Assistant Physiotherapist

Regional Health Forum South

- Senior Speech and Language Therapist
- Social Worker – Staff Grade x 2

There are currently 1.47 WTE vacancies in CDNT Network 3 Kilkenny (Enable Ireland) compared to 8.7 WTE vacancies in 2024. CDNT Network 3 Enable Ireland recently filled a vacant Social Worker post in February.

There are currently no vacancies in CDNT - Network 2 Thomastown and there were no vacancies in 2024. CDNT Network 2 have recruited the following posts in the past year:

- Assistant Physiotherapist
- Speech and Language Therapist – Basic Grade

As with other areas Disability Services within IHA Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary are continuing to experience significant recruitment challenges. The HSE is operating in a very competitive global market as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals nationally and internationally.

The HSE is working collaboratively with the CDNT lead agencies and colleges to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market.

IHA Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary continues to prioritise local competitions for all disciplines and continues to express posts out to current national panels where relevant.

The HSE acknowledge that waiting times for CDNT service at this time are stressful for children and their families, and will continue to explore a range of options to enhance the recruitment and retention of essential staff into our CDNTs.

Ms Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"To Request an update on the proposed primary care centre for New Ross Co Wexford."

Cllr John Fleming

The proposed new Primary Care Centre in New Ross is being delivered by way of HSE Primary Care Centre Operational Lease Model.

The need for a new Primary Care Centre in New Ross had been identified previously. A selection process had been undertaken, and a Preferred Provider had been selected. Unfortunately, the selected Preferred Provider encountered difficulties regarding the economic viability of the proposed project. Therefore the HSE recently withdrew from that process.

To facilitate a re-advertisement of this Primary Care Centre, a full review of the current and future service needs for New Ross area was undertaken with relevant stakeholders and a scope identified based on the updated service requirements. Once the Schedule of Accommodation for New Ross Primary Care Centre was finalised with the service, Capital and Estates proceeded to progress with the advertisement on E-Tenders Procurement Platform.

The HSE recently re-advertised New Ross Primary Care Centre on the E-tenders Procurement Platform with a Prior Information Notice (PIN). The PIN is seeking expressions of interest from interested parties, to enter into the two-step procurement process, in delivering a Primary Care Centre via the HSE's Operational Lease. This publication on the E-Tenders Procurement Platform is the first step in the procurement process.

Following the mandatory waiting period between the PIN and the two-step procurement process, the next stage of the advertisement for New Ross Primary Care Centre is expected to be published on the E-Tenders Procurement Platform in Quarter 2 2025.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"For the month of January 2025, can figures please be provided for how many people were waiting in trolleys in University Hospital Kerry. Please give a 7 day average across the month from Monday through to Sunday."

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

For the month of January 2025, there were a total of 481 people on trolleys, at University Hospital Kerry. This monthly total equates to a 7 day average of approximately 109 patients (Monday through to Sunday).

The average number of patients waiting on trolleys per day per week varies each individual week across January 2025 as follows ~ Week One : 24 patients; Week Two: 15 patients; Week Three: 12 patients; Week Four : 22 patients.

Ms Julie O'Neill
Integrated Health Area Manager Kerry
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

"What is the timeline for the delivery of the long awaited Primary Care Centre for Gorey County Wexford. When can it reasonably be expected to be operational."

Cllr Joe Sullivan

HSE Capital and Estates advise as follows:

The need for a new Primary Care Centre in Gorey had been identified previously. A selection process had been undertaken, and a Preferred Provider selected. Unfortunately, the selected Preferred Provider encountered difficulties regarding the economic viability of the proposed project. The HSE has recently withdrawn from that process.

The Gorey Primary Care Centre was re-advertised in Quarter 4 2024 on the E-tenders Procurement Platform with a Prior Information Notice (PIN). The PIN is seeking expressions of interest from interested parties, to enter into the two-step procurement process, in delivering a Primary Care Centre via the HSE's Operational Lease.

In order to facilitate the second stage of the process of the re-advertisement of Gorey Primary Care Centre, a full review of the current and future service needs is underway with a number of relevant stakeholders. There are a number of stakeholders and services who require accommodation in the new proposed Primary Care Centre and a scope is being identified based on all updated service requirements and a Schedule of Accommodation is being finalised. We expect this process to be concluded in Quarter 2, 2025.

Capital & Estates then will be in a position to progress with next step the advertisement on E-Tenders Procurement Platform. Once this advertisement has been published on the E-Tenders Procurement Platform all information related to the tender will be freely available on the platform.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE would seriously consider availing of the vacant premises as an Ambulance base for the Cobh area using the new vacant unit that is attached to the Primary Care Centre in Cobh."

Cllr Dominic Finn

Thank you for your Motion regarding the potential use of the vacant premises attached to the Primary Care Centre in Cobh as an ambulance base. The National Ambulance Service (NAS) continually reviews its operational deployment to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources in delivering emergency care to communities.

In this regard, the NAS will certainly commit to assessing the premises in Cobh to determine its suitability as a potential deployment point for emergency ambulances or rapid response vehicles. This review will consider factors such as location, accessibility, and operational feasibility.

However, it is important to note that any enhancement of ambulance services in the Cobh area will be subject to the availability of additional resources. The NAS remains committed to optimising its service provision and will continue to evaluate opportunities to improve emergency response in the region.

Thank you again for raising this matter. The NAS will update you in due course following its review of the site.

Mr Rob Moriarty
General Manager – Cork and Kerry
National Ambulance Service

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

"To ask for detailed update on plans for Kelvin Grove site Carlow town."

Cllr. Fergal Browne

Plans for Kelvin Grove, Carlow

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.
- New Ambulance Base including the refurbishment of existing Kelvin Grove House for the National Ambulance Service.

HSE Capital and 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.

Current Update:

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

Holy Angels Day Care Centre is a designated Special Preschool and Therapy Centre for children aged 6 months to 6 years old who have complex needs. Holy Angels Day Care Centre is funded by the HSE through a Section 39 Grant and a Service Level Agreement is in place.

A meeting took place on 18th March 2025 between Capital and Estates, Disability Services and Holy Angels and a decision was made to revise the project to separate Holy Angels and the Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) into two separate projects.

St. Dymphna's will be upgraded to accommodate the CDNT, and the Holy Angels school will progress as planned on the Kelvin Grove site. The schedule of accommodation is being reviewed, and is expected to be finalised in the next few weeks. Once this schedule is agreed, the design team will then translate this to a new design layout and advise on an overall costs. This project is a priority for the HSE and is included in the current HSE Capital Plan.

National Ambulance Service

HSE Capital and 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 will be appointed in Quarter 2 2025.

Due to national procurement rules a new framework for the engagement of Design Teams is required. This process has proven to be extremely challenging.

Following the above appointment, the project programmes and key dates will be agreed with the Service and circulated. This project is a priority for the HSE and is included in the current HSE Capital Plan.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(h) on Agenda refers:

"That this Forum calls on the Minister for Health and the Government to introduce legislation to ban the use of vaping products (e-cigarettes) in indoor public spaces, workplaces, and other designated areas, similar to the existing smoking ban."

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Discussion in the Chambers

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(i) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE would send a list of all the available services at Bantry General Hospital to all the GP's and South Doc in the catchment area of Bantry General Hospital, i.e. West Cork and South Kerry"

Cllr Finbarr Harrington

Please find below overview of services at Bantry General Hospital. This information will be circulated to GP's and South Doc Services within the catchment area of Bantry General Hospital, i.e. West Cork and South Kerry through our GP Unit.

Bantry General Hospital

Bantry General Hospital (BGH) provides services to the population of a unique, rural, area encompassing West Cork and South Kerry. The area extends from the Beara and Sheep's Head Peninsulas in the south to Kenmare in the west, Macroom and Clonakilty in the north and Timoleague in the east and includes several inhabited islands. The hospital is located approximately 60 miles from Cork University Hospital in Cork City.

Under the Reconfiguration of Services Cork & Kerry, BGH has been designated the only Model 2 Remote Rural hospital.

Service Overview:

Bantry General Hospital has over 100 inpatient and day care beds providing acute general hospital services to the people of West Cork. There are over 335WTE employed on site with a number of visiting Consultants travelling out from Cork University Hospital. Principal services are as follows:

Injury Unit: Open seven days a week from 8am to 8pm.

The Injury Unit treats adults and children over five years of age with minor injuries such as a suspected broken bone, dislocations, sprains, wounds and minor burns. Staff can apply plaster casts and stitches. Laboratory and Radiology diagnostics are also available. You can self-present to the Injury Unit or your GP (doctor) or South Doc can refer you. Visit [Bantry Urgent Care Centre](#) for further information.

Medical Assessment Unit: Open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5.00pm

The Medical Assessment Unit accepts referrals from GPs or South Doc for people who have recent onset of symptoms such as breathlessness, chest pain or blackouts. For patients suffering from medical conditions, your GP can also admit you directly to the

Regional Health Forum South

Hospital 24/7 outside of the opening hours if necessary. Visit [Bantry Urgent Care Centre](#) for further information.

Medical Services: Anaesthetics, Acute medicine, Respiratory medicine, Gastroenterology medicine, Cardiac services, Dermatology clinics, Neurology service Rehabilitation Stroke & Rehabilitation medicine, Care of the Elderly, Palliative Care & Tilt Table Testing.

Diagnostic Services: Laboratory medicine, Radiology, Endoscopy and Cardiology testing.

Day Surgical Services: General surgery, Plastic surgery & Gynaecology surgery

Women Services: Gynaecology surgery and outpatient clinics. Midwifery clinics

The Hospital has the capability to resuscitate, stabilise and transfer critical care patients to larger hospitals i.e. Cork University Hospital

Outpatient Services:

- Medicine – Parkinson, MS, Nerve Conduction, General, IBS , Endocrinology
- Geriatric Medicine – General, Falls/Funny turns and Age Care Evaluation
- Diabetes Clinics
- General Surgery
- Gastroenterology Clinics
- Podiatry
- CNS Diabetes Clinic
- Dietician Clinic
- Warfarin Clinic
- Women's Health Clinic
- Outreach General Surgery
- Outreach Dermatology
- Outreach Palliative Care
- Outreach Gynaecology
- Outreach Obstetrics

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Health Area Manager Cork South and West
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(j) on Agenda refers:

"That we work with the parents and friends of St. Francis Special School past and present in locating a Mid Kerry based adult respite centre with a view to providing for the continuing needs of the students who have very few if any options when they become adults."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

HSE South West Disability Services is acutely aware of the demand for respite services and, on receipt of very welcome funding, has significantly invested in respite services in recent years.

The HSE and its funded agencies provide respite care for children and adults with disabilities. Respite can occur in a variety of settings and for various lengths of time, depending on the needs of the individual service user, their family or carer and according to available resources.

HSE South West Disability Services continues to invest in respite services, proactively seek alternative respite models, and utilise all available funding to provide respite services for all children and adults who require them. HSE South West Disability Services welcomes any funding to continue to invest in these vital services.

HSE South West Disability Services provide two residential respite services – one in North Kerry and one in South Kerry. Additionally a wide range of alternative respite options, for example afterschool clubs and outreach respite, are provided to ensure the type of respite meets all requirements.

In early March 2025, representatives from St. Francis Special School contacted HSE South West Disability Services regarding a possible future transitional respite service for the mid-Kerry region. HSE South West Disability Services will discuss this with the representatives of St. Francis Special School and explore the potential for developing a residential respite service in mid Kerry, funding dependent.

It is important to note that, in order to ensure equity of access to respite services, all respite services are available to all persons who meet the access criteria and require services. Any respite facility that would be developed would be for all children or adults who require the service rather than those attending specific schools or services. This would ensure that the cohort of students exiting St. Francis Special School would have

Regional Health Forum South

equity of access to all respite developed to ensure there is a broader access for this cohort.

On receipt of very welcome funding HSE South West will continue to develop respite services for all those requiring same in Kerry and Cork.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(k) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE Regional Health Forum South represents and supports the upfront addressing of the continued staff shortages/vacancies with particular reference to mental health services that are having an extremely serious and detrimental effect on the service."

Cllr John Coonan

The HSE is committed to promoting positive mental health and mental wellbeing across the population and throughout the lifespan of need. To ensure integrated care, service continuity and the best possible outcomes for those experiencing mental health difficulties, services are provided within a stepped-care model where each person can access a range of options of varying intensity to match their needs.

HSE Dublin South East are proactively examining the staffing across Mental Health Services in particular within 3 strands - medical, nursing and support services. The aim of this work stream is to provide a sustainable staffing model for the future of mental health services across IHA Carlow/Kilkenny and Tipperary South and IHA Waterford Wexford and address manpower planning across the Service. This project is being monitored by IHA Leads. The Service have also been examining staff who are on temporary higher appointments and those on temporary contracts to give sustainability to the Service.

The cornerstone of mental health service provision is the community mental health team and throughout the South East there are 18 community mental health teams. In terms of regulated services there are 7 Approved Centres and the staffing of these centres is prioritised as far as possible.

In 2024 mental health nursing graduates were offered permanent employment in the HSE.

The HSE is operating in a very competitive market and there continues to be shortages of qualified Medical and Health and Social Care Professionals including Consultant Psychiatrists, Therapists (Speech & Language, Dietetics). Similar to other services across the HSE, Mental Health also experience challenges when recruiting these grades of staff.

The Service are working to address any vacancies across multi-disciplinary teams as they arise across Mental Health Services. MHS continues to prioritise local recruitment and continues to recruit through international means where necessary.

Regional Health Forum South

National Service Pan 2025

The Service have also been in receipt of 20.0 wte posts through the National Service Plan 2025 which paperwork is being submitted for at present. These posts include:

- Establishment of an Adult ADHD team in the South East (Consultant, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Occupational Therapist and Psychologist),
- Extension of the Eating Disorder Team across the South East (through provision of a Dietitian, Registrar, Psychologist and Social Work Team Leader, admin and 0.2 of Consultant Gastroenterologist support). It is intended to provide the Consultant support through cross-working with St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny.
- Set up a Dual Diagnosis Team (Consultant, Registrar and admin support)
- Peer Support Worker who will be linked to Rehab and Recovery teams in Wexford
- Team Coordinator post for the Crisis Resolution Team and
- 3 posts to enhance the provision of CAMHs Liaison across the South East (Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Specialist and Registrar).

Ms Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"Can I ask for update regarding timeline for when minor injuries unit will be opened in Carlow town?"

Cllr Fergal Browne

In 2012, the Emergency Medicine Programme (EMP) recommended the establishment of Injury Units (IUs) to provide unscheduled emergency care for patients with non-life threatening or limb threatening injuries, as conveniently as possible, while ensuring patient safety and equitable standards of care within an Emergency Care Network. The Carlow Injury Unit will be under the Governance of St Luke's General Hospital Kilkenny, Emergency Medicine Consultants.

Injury Units provide an alternative access for patients for the management of Minor Injuries, as opposed to attending an Emergency Department. The Injury Units have access to everything to provide a complete episode of care for the patient. The average PET time (patient experience time) was noted to be 1.5 hours in 2022. Where appropriate patients are using Injury Units as an alternative to Emergency Departments (EDs).

HSE Estates have advised that the Carlow Local Injuries Unit project has been identified as a priority project and is currently being progressed through the new approvals process and requirements. It is planned that the Unit will be based on St. Dymphna's Hospital Campus. It is the intention that contractors will be appointed in 2025 and that the Unit would be ready for occupation in early 2026.

Ms Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

"To ask for a breakdown of all those awaiting audiology assessment and treatment in CHO4 by LHO area from 0 to 65 plus and the and the length of time that they are awaiting intervention, by age, in tabular form and the measures being considered locally and national to clear such a waiting list."

Cllr Peter Horgan

Cork Kerry Community Audiology maintains waitlist data via a centralised list for Cork Kerry returned functionally as South Lee.

Figures are achievable on a county basis and are outlined in table form below:

HSE South West Community Audiology	Cork	Kerry	Total
Number 0-17 waiting at 28.02.25	1495	457	1952
Number 18+ waiting at 28.02.25	1605	902	2507
Total waiting	3100	1359	4459
Longest waiting time in weeks Paeds	108 weeks	96 weeks	
Longest waiting time in weeks Adults	94 weeks	112 weeks	

HSE South West Audiology Service has undertaken some local waiting list initiatives by way of outsourcing (non-complex Paed caseloads) in 2023 and 2024. This helps short-term to deliver non-complex pathways in more reasonable timelines. The area has demonstrated the efficacy of hybrid approach where non-complex care has been diverted in the past to private providers.

The 2025 HSE South West Primary Care Waiting List Action Plan (WLAP) is currently reviewing the outsourcing of non-complex Paeds caseloads and additional resources to support the waiting list. It is understood that a national procurement exercise is underway to establish a framework of qualified providers.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Health Area Manager South and West Cork
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on Agenda refers:

"Waiting times Orthopaedic operations and procedures in UHW and Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Kilkenny."

Clr Pat Dunphy

Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital, Inpatient Day Case (IPDC) Orthopaedics Waiting List

The current weighted average wait time for orthopaedic procedures at Kilcreene is 3.9 months. There is a total of 781 patients on the waiting list with 1 patient waiting over 24 months.

Kilcreene is currently exceeding the Waiting List Action Plan target of 5.5 months weighted average wait time.

University Hospital Inpatient Day Case (IPDC) Orthopaedics Waiting List

The current weighted Average wait time for orthopaedic procedures at UHW is 10.4 months.

There is a total of 142 patients on the waiting list with 17 patients waiting over 24 months. To address waiting times exceeding the 5.5 month target, a targeted strategy is being explored.

This includes clinical validation of waiting lists and exploring outsourcing options where feasible to ensure timely access to care and reduce overall waiting times.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

"To ask the HSE what measures they are applying to improve retention of care staff for Home Help in the South East".

Cllr Daniel Pender

There have been a number of initiatives addressed in relation to retention of Home support employees across the Southeast outlined as follows:

- Working with relevant staff unions towards rostering principles in relation to number of days worked in a row.
- Assistant Director of Public Health in each County to support staff with clinical supervision, education and challenges that may arise.
- Providing flexible working hours.
- Employees are facilitated with hours within their own areas of work.
- Induction programme available.
- Opportunity of trainings provided.
- Flexibility in relation to retirement dates.

Home Support activity for 2025 will continue to be accounted for in terms of the number of home support hours provided for the number of people in receipt of Home Support. Recruitment of Home support staff is ongoing to support delivery of this service across both Integrated Healthcare areas across the Southeast.

Ms Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(e) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE clarify if the HSE Building; (Father O Leary Hall) on Shandon Street Cork is sold? Can the HSE Confirm if it was offered to the Land Development Agency and Cork City Council for sale. If there is no interest from these parties is it the HSE's intention to place it on the open market?"

Cllr John Sheehan

For clarification purposes, the premises on Shandon Street has not been sold.

In line with both the HSE Property Protocol and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Circular 17/2016 dealing with the disposal of "surplus to requirements" State property, this property has been previously offered to both the Land Development Agency and Cork City Council, both of whom expressly declared having no interest in acquiring same.

In accordance with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Circular 11/2015, it is listed on the State Property Register, its status is marked "surplus to requirements" and therefore, available for inter-state transfers should any other State entity wish to acquire.

In the absence of any expressed interest by another State Stakeholder to acquire, the HSE will then progress the disposal of the property on the open market in line with the aforementioned Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Circulars and the HSE Property Protocol.

Mr Daniel Clifford
Director of Estates
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(f) on Agenda refers:

"Given Killarney has been chosen for a Minor Injuries Unit and this is welcome, what plans, if any are in place for a similar unit to be placed in the North of the county in Tralee or Listowel to further relieve pressure on UHK?"

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

The HSE's Emergency Medicine Programme (EMP) recommended the establishment of Injury Units (IUs) to provide unscheduled emergency care for patients with non-life threatening or limb threatening injuries, as conveniently as possible, while ensuring patient safety and equitable standards of care within an Emergency Care Network. These units typically provide care for non-life threatening or limb-threatening injuries which are unlikely to lead to hospital admission.

The new Minor Injury Unit which is planned for the Kerry area will be located on the grounds of St Columbanus Home in Killarney. A new Community Nursing Unit (CNU) is currently being built on the grounds of the old St Finan's Hospital in Killarney. When completed, the residents and staff from St. Columbanus will transfer to Killarney CNU. Work on this new CNU is progressing well and it is anticipated that the Unit will open in Q4 2025. When the new Killarney CNU is completed, and the residents and staff have transferred, works will then commence on the St. Columbanus site to develop the new Minor Injury Unit.

At UHK, comprising part of the Acute Floor Emergency Department, is the Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) stream. This stream, which typically operates 9am – 9pm Mon-Sun is specifically for non-life and non-limb threatening injuries and is under the operational governance of the Emergency Department Consultants at UHK. The ANP stream enables patients who attend the Emergency Department (with Minor Injuries) to be treated quickly and efficiently.

Any decision to develop a Minor Injury Unit at University Hospital Kerry (UHK) or indeed any additional Minor Injury Units in the HSE South West Region will be done in line with the HSE's Strategic Framework for Population Based Planning (PBP). This framework will assist in the planning and prioritise of services which achieve the best possible population health outcomes within available resources.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(g) on Agenda refers:

"To ask what is the HSE intention for the old Health Centre Building in Knockmahon, Bunmahon, Co. Waterford it hasn't been in use since around 2012?"

Cllr Liam Brazil

I can confirm there are currently no plans in relation to the Health Centre Building located in Knockmahon, Bunmahon, Co Waterford.

The building is vacant and not used by Primary Care Services. Primary Care are currently engaging with Capital Estates Personnel with the aim of exploring future potential opportunities for the building.

As part of the ongoing development of Primary Care, patients can access a range of health services in the nearby Tramore Primary Care Centre, Summerhill Centre, Summerhill, Ballycarnane, Tramore, Co. Waterford and / or Dungarvan Primary Care Centre, Dungarvan Community Hospital Campus, Dungarvan, Waterford.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(h) on Agenda refers:

“What is the up to date situation in relation to the closed Health Centre at Camolin County Wexford. In formulating your answer I would ask you to bear in mind I asked this question first at Health Forum level some 11 years ago.”

Cllr Joe Sullivan

The former Health Centre Camolin, Co. Wexford is surplus to HSE requirements and is on the HSE Property Disposal Register.

In line with the HSE Property Protocol and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform Circular 11/15: Protocols for the Transfer and Sharing of State Property Asset, the HSE has received an expression of interest from Wexford County Council.

The HSE has been informed by Wexford County Council that an audit of the site is being carried out to assess the viability of same. The audit is expected to be finalised at the end of Quarter 1 2025 and it is anticipated that the Local Authority will advise HSE Capital and Estates of whether or not they wish to proceed to secure this property.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(i) on Agenda refers:

"Given the increasing demand for rehabilitation and dementia-specific beds in Kerry, which is contributing to delays in patient discharge from University Hospital Kerry (UHK), what plans are in place to address this issue? Are there any commitments for additional bed capacity or dedicated facilities to support patients requiring specialised care?"

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

The Public Private Partnership development of a Community Nursing Unit which is currently underway in Killarney will assist in addressing this increased demand. There are currently 17 dementia-specific HSE beds in Killarney but the planned opening of the new Unit will provide an additional 13 dementia-specific beds, bringing the total to 30 dementia-specific beds in Killarney. In addition to enhancing dementia-specific capacity, the new unit will deliver 15 extra short stay beds into the system, increasing the current bed count from 35 to 50 beds.

Provision of enhanced services for people in Kerry is a HSE priority and HSE South West is committed to improving dementia-specific care and rehabilitation services in the Kerry region.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(j) on Agenda refers:

"Can we please get an update on exactly what current School Dental service is available in West Cork and where exactly we are with recruitment of School Dentists in the West Cork Area."

Cllr Finbarr Harrington,

The HSE Primary Care Dental Service provides dental treatment to eligible children, adults and children with special care needs and others in the care of the HSE at various locations throughout Cork and Kerry. Children under 16 years of age, and the special care needs patient cohort, are treated in HSE dental clinics. Adult medical card holders are treated by private dental practitioners contracted to operate the Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS).

There are currently two dental surgeons based in West Cork, in Clonakilty Primary Care Centre and Bantry Primary Care Centre. School dental screening is on target in West Cork, currently completing 6th class and should begin 2nd classes in mid to late summer. Recruitment process for filling vacant dental surgeon post in West Cork is currently underway.

**Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Health Area Manager
South and West Cork
HSE South West**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(k) on Agenda refers:

“What is the current waiting time for a child to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) once a GP referral is done for the child?”

Cllr Dominic Finn

CAMHS community services in HSE Southwest are delivered across 10 community sector teams, as well as a specialist Child and Adolescent Regional Eating Disorder Services (CAREDS) team and a Regional Mental Health and Intellectual Disability team.

HSE Southwest also provide a CAMHS Liaison Service at Cork University Hospital, the Mercy Hospital and University Hospital Kerry.

The current waiting time for access to CAMHS in Cork & Kerry varies throughout the service. Once received by the team, every referral is triaged. It is then discussed by the Multidisciplinary team at their weekly meeting. If the referral is accepted, the young person is added to the waiting list, with the most urgent being prioritised.

The service regrets that young people cannot always access the CAMHS service as quickly as they or we would like. Staff across the service are actively taking measures to acquire the necessary resources, clinical and otherwise, to ensure a quality service for the children of Cork & Kerry going forward.

Recruitment across CAMHS has been challenging recently. Every effort is being made to ensure vacant posts are filled as quickly as possible.

A regional ADHD waitlist initiative team has been developed to address those waiting longest for access to CAMHS ADHD supports across Cork and Kerry. This team accept referrals from community CAMHS teams for young people waiting longest for access to ADHD supports. Since its introduction in November 2023, 192 young people have been seen by this team.

HSE CAMHS Hubs have commenced implementation within selected HSE Community Mental Health Services across the country. These services will become an integral part of each community Mental Health Service in the future. This is an important step in the journey to provide modern, responsive and fit-for-purpose Mental Health Services.

The vision for CAMHS Hubs is "To provide intensive brief mental health interventions to support CAMHS Teams in delivering enhanced responses to children, young people and their families or carers, in times of acute mental health crisis". CAMHS Hub will support Community CAMHS Teams by providing an enhanced level of brief intervention mental health support for children and young people aged up to 18 years, experiencing an acute mental health crisis, where it is determined the needs of the child or young person require a rapid response, time-bound intensive brief intervention. Funding has been allocated for these posts in Cork, and the HSE Southwest is currently in the process of recruiting them. The service is expected to be operational by the second half of the year.

The service is committed to making the necessary investments and implementation of long-term reforms to improve mental health service access, ensuring that people receive the care they need when they need it. However, it is recognised that there is still much work to be done.

Ms Julie O'Neill
Integrated Health Area Manager Kerry
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

27th March 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(I) on Agenda refers:

"Are there staff vacancies impacting the service provided to Fertha Day Centre Cahersiveen and if so when will those vacancies be filled and how will service delivery be impacted in the interim."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Kerry Mental Health Services presently do not have any vacancies for Nursing or Healthcare assistant staff in Fertha Day Centre. An Acting Clinical Nurse Manager 2 has recently been appointed to replace the permanent Clinical Nurse Manager who is presently on maternity leave. Additional nursing staff are redeployed as required from existing Kerry Mental Health Services to cover any other vacancies. An additional staff nurse has been allocated to the Fertha Day Centre Service, which will complement the existing nursing and healthcare assistant staff team. Support staff provide a cleaning service 13 out of 14 days every fortnight in Fertha View Day Centre. There are currently no vacancies in the support staff complement covering mental health facilities in Cahersiveen

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

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
1st May 2025

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE provide an update on the Primary Care Centre for Youghal and a timeline on same."

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley

The new primary care centre is fundamental to the delivery of service reforms set out in "Slaintecare". 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.

Capital and Estates Office are working with the Developer on the completion of the legal documents, required for the development. While the Developer is working in the background on the procurement of the Contractor for the construction of the facility. It is currently anticipated that the facility will be completed by Q2 2027.

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 and it is planned that Youghal Primary Care Centre will have all of these 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.

Ms Sonya Cotter
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"How many community hospital beds are available in Cork County for long-term stay patients? How many people are currently awaiting the fair deal scheme in Cork County? And how many people are availing of the fair deal scheme in Cork County? Lastly, what is the bed capacity across Cork County between both private nursing homes and HSE community hospitals for long-term care?"

Cllr Ann Bambury

Community hospital beds available in Cork County for long-term stay patients:

The availability of residential care in public nursing homes is an important component of the overall community health care provision. Once an applicant is deemed to require care through the Nursing Home Support Scheme they are not denied a service due to a lack of bed availability but may prefer to wait for a facility of their choice to become available. Prospective residents and their families may put themselves on multiple bed waiting lists across different care facilities.

It should be noted that the HSE is continuing a major capital building programme across its Community Nursing Facilities for the purpose of SI 293 compliance. This programme at times may result in temporary bed closures while refurbishments are taking place. Staffing challenges can also temporarily impact bed capacity. Despite these challenges, the HSE is continuing to provide a residential care service that is focused on quality and safety while also meeting the needs of the individual Service User.

As at the end of March 2025, in Cork city and county, **834** beds were designated for use by long term residents in our HSE Community Hospitals/Community Nursing Units. These beds are operating at full capacity and any interim gap in occupancy rate is as a result of waiting for residents to be admitted. The Continuing Care Placement Coordinators (CCPC) team manages access to public long term care beds and maintains waiting lists for Fair Deal approved applicants who wish to access a HSE long term care bed. When a bed becomes available, the CCPC team advises the next person on the waiting list of same.

Our Community Hospital waiting lists are not a reflection of the number of people who do not have a residential placement; the majority of those people waitlisted have already availed of a bed in another unit. They remain on the waiting list for their preferred unit(s) as per their wishes but we regularly find that when a vacancy does arise and we offer a placement in one of our public units, the offer is often declined because the person has settled in their current location.

The changing needs of residents with regard to their complexity and specific regulatory compliance requirements govern the provision of bed capacity in today's healthcare landscape to ensure delivery in a safe and appropriate manner. The number and skill mix of staff has to be appropriate to meet the needs of residents living in our units so that they continue to receive the highest standard of care.

Number of people availing of the fair deal scheme in Cork County:

The **Nursing Home Support Scheme, also known as Fair Deal**, is a scheme of financial support for people who need long-term nursing home care. The primary legislation underpinning the NHSS is the Nursing Home Support Scheme Act 2009, and the Nursing Home Amendment Act 2021 which governs the appointment of a family successor in respect to businesses and farms thereby capping any financial assessment against such entities to 3 years.

Participants in the NHSS contribute to the cost of their care according to their means while the State pays the balance of the cost. The Scheme aims to ensure that long-term nursing home care is accessible and affordable for everyone and that people are cared for in the most appropriate settings.

Funding to support people to access services in the sector continues to be provided in line with the long-established statutory mechanisms under the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act 2009. This is the mechanism established by the Oireachtas to provide for the processes relating to funding under the NHSS and the negotiation of prices for services for private and voluntary providers with the designated State agency, the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF).

In order to receive state support, a person who has applied for such support must be assigned to a nursing home (public or private). The number of Cork city and county residents (by home address on application for the scheme) in receipt of funding and availing of the Fair Deal scheme as at 31st March 2025 was 2,663 people.

Number of people currently awaiting the fair deal scheme in Cork County:

The Cork Kerry NHSO is the second largest office nationally and its activity rose significantly between 2023 and 2024 (+ 7.38%). The turn-around time from Receipt of Application to date of financial sign off is well within the average national parameters but has increased since 2023 as the office experienced increased work flow. At present, the average waiting time on the National Waiting list for funding is approximately 4 weeks.

As of 24th April 2025, the number of applicants awaiting Fair Deal approval (decision pending) in Cork city and county amounted to 308 people. Of these, 196 are awaiting Common Summary Assessment Report approval and further financial information is awaited from 112 applicants. 588 applications under the scheme have been received by the NHSO to date this year.

There is no mechanism to enable expediting of the process while financial or clinical information is outstanding. The service is bound by the legislation contained in the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act, 2009 in that the Nursing Homes Support Office cannot issue a financial decision until the Common Summary Assessment Report is clearly shown to recommend long-term care and is signed off to that effect at a Local Placement Forum (LPF) following any appropriate clinical assessments as may be necessary.

Bed capacity across Cork County between both private nursing homes and HSE community hospitals for long-term care:

There are approximately 2100 private long term care beds in Cork city and county, equating to a total bed capacity across HSE and private facilities of approximately 2,934 beds.

Bed availability in private nursing homes is difficult to quantify for the HSE as private operators are free to accept private patients outside of Fair Deal and are not obliged to inform the HSE of such arrangements. In addition, private operators may not utilise all beds due to costs and/or staffing constraints.

It is important to note that private nursing homes are registered under the Health Act 2007 as private entities with their own governance and legal responsibilities. Private Nursing Homes are privately owned and operated facilities and the HSE has no remit over private nursing home decisions in terms of admission and access criteria.

Long term residential care has an intrinsic role to play in a continuum of care to ensure our increasing older population can avail of the specialist care they need, when they need it. The principle of resident choice within the Nursing Home Support Scheme (or Fair Deal) empowers the person to avail of care in their preferred setting - public, private or voluntary.

Ms Sonya Cotter
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"That this Forum urges the HSE and hospitals within the Cork area to frontload efforts to hire radiation therapists especially in order to open the closed linear accelerator and CT Scanner in Cork University Hospital."

Cllr Peter Horgan

The Senior Management Team at Cork University Hospital (CUH) continue to prioritise the recruitment of Radiation Therapists (RT). The following outlines measures which have been put in place:

- A derogation from the HSE recruitment pause has ensured that recruitment of Radiation Therapists continues.
- An external recruitment agency has been engaged to support international recruitment of Radiation Therapist.
- Relocation packages have developed and approved for international recruits.
- CUH have developed a bursary for students entering the MSc Radiation Therapy in UCC, this includes a commitment for recipients to work for the HSE for 2 years upon graduation.
- A schedule of recruitment campaign has been developed to facilitate on-going and timely recruitment of candidates/new graduates.
- Agency/locum RTs are being utilised to support services, where available.
- Funding has been secured to advertise Radiation Therapist posts in CUH in international journals.

CUH presently has a staffing deficit of 13.5 WTE i.e. 25% in this area. It is acknowledged that there is a significant shortage of qualified candidates to fill these posts in the domestic talent pool market. Vacant posts continue to be prioritised for filling with recruitment campaigns scheduled to run quarterly. The most recent campaign to fill 4 Clinical Specialist RT posts secured 1 successful candidate. The next recruitment campaign for Staff Grade RT's is scheduled for Advertisement in May 2025.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"Could the HSE address the issue where GP Practices have no referral pathway available for GP's to access Radiological Investigations for children patients who have Medical / GP Visit Cards."

Cllr Dominic Finn

In line with national clinical protocols and best practices, the relevant children's access to radiological services are in place which include GP referral pathway for adults or children for diagnostic services for plain film x-rays. The Urgent Virtual Care (UVC) pilot currently underway at Cork University Hospital is exploring all 'access to diagnostics' from GP's. This will allow the development of referral pathways for diagnostics which have been heretofore excluded from National Agreements. We are working with the office of the HSE's National Director for National Services and Schemes to understand demand, capacity and costings.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

"I am requesting that the HSE would employ a full-time clinical specialist podiatrist in West Cork as part of a preventative strategy in chronic disease management so this would be in line with the N.I.C.E. Guidelines and the International working group of the Diabetic Foot and The National wound care strategy programme in the UK."

Cllr Danny Collins

In line with the national "Integrated Programme for the Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease" an allocation of one senior podiatrist is considered appropriate for the provision of specialised diabetic footcare in Network 10.

A previous recruitment drive proved unsuccessful in securing a person in this role. Approval has been granted to readvertise this post, and a campaign is anticipated to occur soon. In the interim, podiatry specialised footcare is provided in West Cork on a weekly basis by a clinical specialist podiatrist recruited to the Cork City South team.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"That this Forum requests an update on the publication of the North Kerry CAMHS Review."

Cllr Deirdre Ferris

In 2023, the HSE commissioned the North Kerry CAMHS Look Back Review following the South Kerry CAMHS look back review and the publication of the Maskey report. A random file audit of open cases conducted in North Kerry CAMHS in 2022 indicated the need for a comprehensive review. Consequently, the Senior Management Team within Mental Health Services commissioned a review of all cases open to North Kerry CAMHS as of 21st November 2022.

Initially, it was hoped that the review would be completed quickly. However, Dr. Colette Halpin and her team of consultants realised that a thorough and robust review would take longer. The priority was to ensure that every young person's file received a consistent and detailed review. All file reviews have now been completed, and all individuals and families have been directly informed about the outcomes of their reviews.

During the review, any young person whose file showed deficits in care was invited to an individual Open Disclosure meeting, where the HSE outlined the review findings and sincerely apologised to both the young person and their family. Ongoing support is being provided to these individuals and families by the HSE Clinical Liaison Support Team.

Dr. Halpin is currently drafting her report based on the findings of all reviewed cases. Once the draft is received, some additional work will be required before completion and publication, but every effort is being made to expedite this process.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE investigate the feasibility of providing nursing, Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), or physiotherapy support—potentially in partnership with MTU Tralee—on-site at the hydrotherapy pool located on the university campus. This facility, which is already equipped with hoist access, presents a valuable opportunity to expand its use in supporting individuals with mobility challenges, whether in rehabilitation or as part of ongoing mobility-focused programmes"

Cllr Mikey Sheehy

Primary Care Services are aware of the hydrotherapy pool located at Munster Technological University (MTU) and acknowledge the therapeutic value such a facility can provide in certain clinical cases.

At present, the hydrotherapy pool is not routinely utilised across Primary Care Services, as it is not clinically indicated for the majority of patients referred to our teams. As such, there are no current plans to assign dedicated Physiotherapy or Nursing staff from Primary Care for broader service delivery at the pool.

However, I'm pleased to share that a targeted initiative will be commencing at the end of May. The Community Healthcare Network 2 (CHN2) Physiotherapist will facilitate a pool-based rehabilitation programme at MTU specifically for suitable musculoskeletal (MSK) clients who are currently on the Outpatient Department (OPD) waiting list.

This programme will be delivered in a small group format and will focus on engaging patients in aquatic exercise and improving balance. The primary objective is to build participants' confidence in using the pool environment for rehabilitation and to support them in managing ongoing or chronic MSK conditions independently over time.

While this programme is specific to a select client cohort, it reflects an important and proactive step in enhancing service delivery where clinically appropriate. It's also worth noting that Disability Services may have a more consistent and ongoing need for access to hydrotherapy services, given the nature of their client needs.

HSE South West Children's Disability Services have three Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) covering the Kerry area. These teams are managed by the Brothers of Charity Southern Services and Enable Ireland. The CDNTs provide services for children with complex disability needs in Kerry.

Regional Health Forum South

Children with complex disability needs currently access the MTU hydrotherapy pool and are accompanied by CDNT staff. Access to the pool is costed to CDNT. This facility is enormously beneficial to children in the area.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"How many home care hours are being contracted to private home care companies by the HSE, and how many are provided by HSE-contracted HCSAs? Also, how many older people currently qualify for home care assistance?"

Cllr Ann Bambury

The HSE South West Home Support department is the largest provider of home care in Ireland and even with the large number of Health Care Assistant staff that we have, we constantly require more because of the ever-increasing demand for our service. HSE South West's geographical area encompasses Kerry and Cork, covering approximately 16,390 square kilometres and serving a population of more than 700,000 people.

Well documented recruitment and retention challenges mean that we are often unfortunately forced to maintain a waiting list for our service requests in some areas, with rural locations facing particular pressures. This is not a funding issue, it is a workforce availability issue. Capacity is and has been an on-going issue within the home support service, for both the HSE and for our approved private providers, for some time.

In order to meet the growing demand for home support and enhance our capacity to deliver same, HSE South West continues strident recruitment efforts in the region in the face of an often challenging employment environment.

Initiatives underway in the HSE South West region to counter capacity issues in the home support sector include the appointment of two dedicated recruitment coordinators for Health Care Assistants (Home Support) with campaigns running throughout the year. The most recent recruitment campaign for Health Care Assistants (Home Support) staff was undertaken earlier this year which, following screening and interview, has identified 86 potential candidates for Cork and Kerry positions. Pending completion of recruitment checks, the outcome of this campaign will be utilised to address requirements in the Home Support Service across the region.

How many home care hours are being contracted to private home care companies by the HSE, and how many are provided by HSE-contracted HCSAs?

When a request for home support is received, the HSE's priority is to identify availability to deliver that support. Capacity is sought both within our own home support service

and with our approved private providers. If the HSE's home support service does not have available home support staff, then the request is sent out to the private providers and if any of those providers has capacity the service will be delivered by them. The request will always be sent to private providers if we do not have available staff to allocate the service. However, increasingly, our private providers are experiencing similar recruitment and retention issues to ourselves, resulting in some applications being waitlisted until availability arises within either sector (HSE or private).

By end March 2025 a total of **786,752** home support hours were delivered across the South West region. **564,527** of these hours were provided by HSE employed HCAs (Home Support) and **222,225** hours by HSE contracted private providers.

How many older people currently qualify for home care assistance?

Home Support is allocated based on clinically assessed needs of individuals, with those identified through assessment as being of greatest need given priority. All referrals for home support are allocated a Priority Rating based on the client's assessed need, and it is on this basis that service is awarded in chronological order.

Where a number of applicants have equal priority status, chronological order will apply to determine which of that group of applicants is to be offered the next available support/resource. However this is dependent on carer availability in the area, both within the HSE's own staffing complement and that of our private providers.

In terms of older people qualifying for home care assistance, as at end March 2025 there were in excess of **8,000** clients in receipt of Home Support across the South West Region. In addition, there were a further **532** clients who had been assessed for Home Support but were waiting for a service to commence.

HSE South West will continue to work to identify strategies to reduce our waiting lists. Our population is growing and it is also ageing and this means that demand for home support services is projected to increase substantially. Improving access to home support is a service priority for HSE South West and, to this end, we will consider and utilise all available avenues to fulfil our service requirements.

Ms Sonya Cotter

**Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East
HSE South West**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

“What is the current wait time for a first-time chemotherapy appointment, from time of decision/consent to treat in all hospitals in the HSE Dublin and South East health region? What are the plans to reduce wait times in each of the relevant hospitals?”

Cllr Roger Kennedy

The HSE National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) KPI for chemotherapy administration:
...“ **within 15 working days of the date of the finalised treatment plan**”.

St. Vincent's University Hospital

Based on data from the past 12 months, SVUH consistently meets the KPI with 100% compliance.

The NCCP has a Medical Oncology KPI for SACT access: “For patients receiving a new parenteral systemic therapy in the day ward setting, the timeline between the date that it is agreed that the patient is deemed ready to treat and the administration of the new parenteral systemic therapy will not exceed 15 working days. As one of the eight designated cancer centres, SVUH works towards this KPI.

SVUH meets this KPI, with no breaches due to capacity since February 2023. There are regularly patients outside of the target due to medical reasons or personal choice. Please see table below for further information.

University Hospital Waterford

Based on data from the past 12 months, UHW's average compliance rate with this KPI is 71.2%.

Current Challenges:

- Limited Capacity in the current Day Ward, which is off-site in UPMC
- Significant Increase in the referral rate to the oncology services
- Changes to duration and frequency of treatment modalities, which have significantly impacted on day ward capacity.
- Limitation in types and amounts of treatments being delivered in other Day Wards around the region directly affects UHW Day Ward (if there is no capacity in other day wards, patients automatically come to UHW).
- Limited resources in the Pharmacy to address the increasing demand regarding chemotherapy compounding.

Efforts to address challenges

- UHW day ward operating hours are 8-8, 5 days a week
- All usage of the capacity in the day ward has been assessed, and non-chemo administration infusions/procedures have been relocated to other clinical areas where appropriate
- Refurbishment project commenced in UHW, which will allow Day Ward to relocate back onsite with some increased capacity and will support workflow efficiencies.
- Business Cases submitted to increase resources in the pharmacy department.

St Luke's Hospital Carlow Kilkenny

St Luke's hospital Carlow Kilkenny has an average compliance rate with this KPI is 71.2%, based on data from the past 12 months. St Luke's has noted an increase in the number referrals, and there are plans in place to relocate the department to support optimising capacity and increasing patient access.

Clinical Governance for the patients is provided by University Hospital Waterford.

Tipperary University Hospital

South Tipperary University Hospital consistently achieves its KPI of 100%, Clinical Governance for the patients is provided by University Hospital Waterford.

Wexford General Hospital

Wexford General Hospital consistently achieves its KPI of 100%, Clinical Governance for the patients is provided by University Hospital Waterford.

Ms Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on Agenda refers:

"Following on from the publication of the HSE capital plan, which is welcome, I seek in tabular form the number of staff by grade required to fulfil the operations in totality of each new project in the Cork area."

Cllr Peter Horgan

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

"Following on from the publication of the HSE capital plan, which is welcome, I seek in tabular form the number of staff by grade required to fulfil the operations in totality of each new project in the Waterford area."

Cllr John Pratt

The HSE Capital Plan funded from the National Development Plan provides significant public investment in health infrastructure to meet current need, to cater for population growth and to respond to the changing demographic profile in Ireland. It also supports the vision of high quality, safe, accessible and sustainable healthcare, enabled by capital funding.

The HSE Capital Plan was published in April 2025 and accessible on the HSE website on the following link: <https://about.hse.ie/publications/hse-capital-plan-2025/>

The Capital Plan provides details on projects for Cork, Waterford and other areas.

The 2025 HSE Capital Plan is focused on improving the experience of patients, staff and everyone who engages with the HSE. Modern infrastructure and equipment are a crucial component in the provision of a safe and quality health service, a contributor to a positive patient experience and to staff wellbeing. The funding allocated for 2025 will progress and deliver a range of community and acute projects across the Cork and Waterford areas. This investment will support the model of integrated care, the delivery of Sláintecare, pathways to universal healthcare and provide increased capacity in the health system. A significant allocation of funding continues to be made available to prioritise patient safety and deal with risk. This includes the replacement of medical equipment, ambulance replacement programmes and infrastructure upgrades.

Each capital submission holds information about estimated Whole Time Equivalents (WTEs) and this information is transferred into National Service Plan as required.

Regional Health Forum South

Capital Plan funds allocated in a given year, need to be fully utilised in the given year. The commitment to the delivery is evidenced by the annual scale of capital investment in providing modern fit for purpose healthcare facilities across the country. Investment in premises for healthcare is a crucial enabler of integrated care.

The staff required to fulfil the operations in projects identified in the HSE Capital Plan 2025 is subject to a number of variables including but not limited to existing operations on a site, the care provided, deliberations with union representation and post approval. While staffing estimates will be identified in a project planning phase, final staffing arrangements by grade and number can only be finalised at the latter stages of project finalisation when it is clear when a facility will come on stream, the implications of that on existing services, the clinical services provided as well as ancillary service requirements.

There are various projects across hospital and community healthcare services that are being progressed, according as to various necessary steps in processes are established. These include design, confirmation of accommodation schedules, availability or suitability of a site, tender for construction, funding approval and other consultations and considerations.

Within the current approved capital projects list and associated staffing for many services it will involve a transfer of the existing staff cohort to newly purposed facilities.

Ms Dorota Nieznanska
Assistant National Director
HSE Capital & Estates Dublin and South East

Mr Daniel Clifford
Assistant National Director
HSE Capital & Estates Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(e) on Agenda refers:

"Are the HSE looking at opening extra respite beds in Older Persons Services in the West Cork area as at the moment there is a massive need for them."

Cllr Danny Collins

The below table sets out current respite beds in West Cork, broken down by hospital location:

Community Hospital	Open respite beds
Clonakilty Community Hospital	4
Dunmanway Community Hospital	3
Schull Community Hospital	2
Skibbereen Community Hospital	3
Castletownbere Community Hospital	2
Total	14

There are currently no immediate plans to increase respite capacity in the West Cork region. However, we will continue to explore opportunities to enhance the availability and capacity of respite beds, contingent upon the maintenance of safe and adequate staffing levels to ensure the delivery of optimal care to our residents.

Ms Priscilla Lynch
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(f) on Agenda refers:

"Have the HSE had any requests for a meeting with representatives of the families of St Francis' School since our last meeting and if so, can the members be informed of any updates or plans?"

Cllr. Deirdre Ferris

HSE South West Disability Services have received documentation relating to the proposed development of adult day services and respite services on the grounds of St. Mary of the Angels, Beaufort, Co. Kerry from the principal of St. Francis Special School.

As St. Mary of the Angels is operated by St. John of God Kerry Services, we have advised the school principal and representatives of the St Francis Special School parents' community that contact in regard to this should in the first instance, be made with management at St. John of God Services.

HSE South West Disability Services can confirm that the principal of St. Francis Special School has recently engaged with St. John of God Services on this matter.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

1st May 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(g) on Agenda refers:

"I am seeking clarification regarding the recent announcement about the introduction of 24/7 cardiac care services in University Hospital Waterford. Could you confirm if this announcement is accurate, and if so, provide details on the expected timeline for when the service will be fully operational?"

Clr Pat Dunphy

The HSE Dublin and South East health region welcomes the publication of the National Review of Adult Specialist Cardiac Services in Ireland.

The review, chaired by Professor Philip Nolan, and supported by an expert and patient representative steering group, undertook an evidence-based comprehensive national review of scheduled and unscheduled hospital-based services for the diagnosis and treatment of cardiac disease in adults.

The recommendations in its report set out the best way to achieve integration of cardiac services across primary, acute and social community care. The HSE is preparing an implementation plan (for completion by June 2025) for the restructuring and strengthening of our National Heart Programme.

In line with the recommendations of the report of the National Review of Adult Specialist Cardiac Services in Ireland, it is expected that this HSE implementation plan will include provision for primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) for acute heart attacks at University Hospital Waterford on a 24/7 basis.

In March 2025, this service at UHW was extended and the current opening hours are 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.

Dr Sinead Reynolds
Integrated Healthcare Area Manager
Waterford/Wexford

MOTION AND QUESTION RESPONSES

FORUM MEETING
5th June 2025

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025a

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(a) on Agenda refers:

“What options, if any, are available to Day Care Centres in South Tipperary and throughout the South East region to apply for funding for a replacement bus to enable the smooth operation of transporting users safely to and from day care centres?”

Cllr Marie Murphy

Services for Older Persons

At present, eight Day Care Centres and six Meals on Wheels services in South Tipperary receive funding to support the ongoing operation of their services through the HSE Older Persons Services Section 39 budget. These operational budgets are allocated annually to each service; however, it is important to note that they do not include provisions for capital expenditure, such as the purchase or replacement of vehicles.

In recognition of this issue, there was approval and national allocation of once-off capital expenditure grant in 2024/2025, making up to €25,000 available per eligible service to support capital needs.

Eight Day Care services in South Tipperary applied for and were approved for the full €25,000 grant. This funding stream is now fully completed and no further capital funding is currently available under this scheme.

Should new funding opportunities arise in the future, updates will be communicated through the appropriate HSE or Department of Health channels. In addition services are encouraged to continue liaising with their local HSE Older Persons Section 39 Manager and to consider any new funding streams becoming available that may support capital investment needs.

Disability Services

With regard to transport provision to attend Disability Day Services, the provision of transport services is not part of core services within disability services.

Acknowledging the need for appropriate accessible transport without which some people would not be able to access day services, the HSE works collaboratively with Day Service providers, the people attending the service and their families in relation to viable transport solutions. Many families transport their family member to and from disability

Regional Health Forum South

services each day. Some service providers have built up their own transport fleet that provide the necessary transport to people attending their services.

Funding has been made available over the past number of years to service providers to fund the purchase of additional and replacement buses. However no new funding allocation has been provided to the HSE for running costs of providing transport including drivers to individuals to and from Day Services.

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(b) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE reconsider the €220 fee for the Chicken Pox Vaccine for children born before October 1st 2024 with special consideration given to a free vaccine for children with disabilities and/or underlying health conditions whose families already face additional costs."

Cllr Adrienne Wallace

The HSE National Immunisation Office implements immunisation programmes on behalf of the Department of Health (DOH) in line with DOH immunisation policy. The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) makes recommendations on immunisation to the DOH.

In 2023, NIAC recommended varicella vaccination be offered to all children born on or after 1st October 2024. As a result, the DOH asked the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) to undertake a health technology assessment examining the benefits of adding varicella vaccine to the Primary Childhood Immunisation Programme for these children. The HIQA assessment concluded it would be cost effective to add the chickenpox vaccine to the childhood immunisation programme.

NIAC has not recommended a catch-up programme for children born before 1st October 2024 and there is no Department of Health policy to offer a catch-up programme. As such, the HSE has received funds to offer varicella vaccine to children born on or after 1st October 2024 only. Therefore, parents who wish children born before 1st October 2024 to receive the varicella vaccine will need to arrange this privately through their General Practitioner.

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(c) on Agenda refers:

"Do the HSE have any plans for a one stop addiction therapy hub, in Waterford City and county? Indeed, what addiction services are there currently available, in Waterford? Namely, for people suffering from either drugs, alcohol or gambling addictions, or indeed, a combination of any or all of these."

Cllr. Declan Barry

The HSE, Substance Misuse Treatment Service (SMTS) is located on the campus of St Otteran's Hospital, Johns Hill, Waterford City.

The Substance Misuse Team provides a range of free and confidential services in Waterford City and County. These services are for anyone affected by problematic drugs, alcohol misuse or gambling and can be accessed by individuals irrespective of what stage they are at - right across the spectrum of addiction. The service's mission is to promote wellness and recovery while improving the overall quality of life for individuals and their families struggling with substance misuse.

This service provides a single point of entry for referral, assessment and treatment for people and their families experiencing issues relating to drugs, alcohol or gambling in the Waterford City and County.

The Multidisciplinary Team includes General Practitioners, Nurses, Liaison Midwife, Addiction Counsellors, Outreach Workers, General Attendant and a Co-ordinator who manages the service.

The HSE Substance Misuse Service takes an inter-agency, care and case management approach, ensuring that the complex needs of service users and their families are met. The Substance Misuse team provides counselling supports (individual and group), nursing interventions, group work, Opiate Antagonistic Treatment (OAT) (Waterford City and Dungarvan), and also has a liaison nursing service in University Hospital Waterford.

The HSE Substance Misuse Team works collaboratively with the HSE Mental Health colleagues in the facilitation of dual diagnosis counselling and a dual diagnosis Opiate Antagonistic Treatment (OAT Clinic).

The team also work with primary care GPs and community pharmacies in providing a patient-centred approach.

In addition the HSE provides funding for the provision of community-based Drug and Alcohol Initiatives / Workers and Outreach Workers across 5 locations within Waterford

Regional Health Forum South

city and county, facilitated through Section 39 partner agencies. Workers provide harm reduction education, relapse-prevention and family support.

The South East Family Support Network is also funded by the HSE and works with families affected by problematic substance use issues.

Service users in the South East can also avail of HSE-funded TIER 4 residential Treatment services in the South East and nationally as part of their care plan.

- Aiseirí Treatment Centre Wexford
- Aiseirí Treatment and Detoxification Centre Cahir Co Tipperary
- Aislinn Adolescent Detoxification Treatment Centre, Ballyragget, Co Kilkenny
- St Francis Farm Detoxification and Treatment Centre, Tullow, Co Carlow

In addition the following online support services are available to service users in Waterford

- Better Together - Peer Support
- South East Gambling Addiction Supports
- South East Cocaine Addiction Support
- Women's Gender Specific Service

Contact can be made with the HSE Waterford Substance Misuse Team on (051) 848 658. Self-referrals can be facilitated, in addition to those made to the Substance Misuse team by a GP, healthcare professional or support worker.

A range of resources on substance misuse (including in several languages) is available on the HSE's www.Drugs.ie.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Notice of Motion 4(d) on Agenda refers:

"To outline the capital funding allocations for health facilities in County Carlow as recently announced by the HSE".

Cllr. Fergal Browne

Local Injuries Unit

Programme funding has been included in the HSE Capital Plan 2025 for the provision of a Local Injuries Unit at St. Dymphna's Hospital, Carlow.

Enabling works has commenced in order to make space for the relevant area in St. Dymphna's Hospital. This will allow for the decanting of HSE personnel and services to facilitate the main project. It is expected that the main contractor will be appointed for this project in early Quarter 4 of this year, with works to be completed in early 2026.

Holy Angels - Kelvin Grove Site, Carlow

The HSE-appointed Design Team is working to finalise the revised layout for the Holy Angels School on the Kelvin Grove site in Carlow. As part of this process, a revised cost estimate will be provided. A full programme of works indicating milestone dates is also being finalised with the Design Team, and this should be made available shortly. Capital Funding has been allocated to progress this project through design this year.

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(e) on Agenda refers:

"Can I request the following information be provided: the number of children living in Cork County currently awaiting a referral to a children's disability network team? Also, please provide an up-to-date breakdown of the number of children currently awaiting various therapies, e.g., speech & language, psychologist, play therapy, and the average length of time they await these vital therapies through the CDNT services."

Cllr. Ann Bambury

Services provided by CDNT /Lead Agencies

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

There are 14 CDNTs across the HSE South West each located within the Community Healthcare Network areas. Each CDNT is managed by one of the Section 38 and 39 Lead Agencies; Brothers of Charity, Horizons (Section 38); CoAction, Enable Ireland and St Joseph's Foundation (Section 39).

The CDNT service model is based on a partnership between families and team members which focuses on a child's strengths, capacity and skills. 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. Universal Support, Targeted Support and Individual Support. As each child is unique, our teams work with them and their families to offer the best supports for their needs:

CDNT Caseload

Each CDNT has an active caseload with a waitlist for their *Initial Contact* pathway – see **Appendix 1** for breakdown of current caseload and initial contact waitlist across the 14 CDNTs in HSE South West. This table also details the number of appointments (group, individual and initial contact) offered in April 2025.

Across all 14 CDNTs therapists are employed to provide therapeutic intervention to the children on their caseloads. Over the last 12 months the number of therapists employed across the 14 CDNTs has increased by 18.27 WTE. Nevertheless families continue to

Regional Health Forum South

experience delays where vacant posts exist. CDNT staffing figures are provided in **Appendix 2**. The HSE is working with the lead agencies to address approved vacant posts.

CDNT support children attending both Special Schools and Mainstream Schools. Ten percent (10%) of children with complex disability needs are enrolled with special schools; ninety percent (90%) enrolled with mainstream schools and some children do not attend school. Children attending special schools may have complex learning needs but not necessarily complex health needs.

Julie O'Neill
Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West

Appendix 1: HSE South West - CDNT Caseload, Initial Contact Waitlist and Appointments provided as at 30/04/2025.

	CDNT 1	CDNT 2	CDNT 3	CDNT 4	CDNT 5	CDNT 6	CDNT 7	CDNT 8	CDNT 9	CDNT 10	CDNT 11	CDNT 12	CDNT 13	CDNT 14	TOTALS
Caseload - April	391	437	594	750	452	445	558	503	449	814	459	712	722	455	7,741
Waitlist for Initial Contact - April	24	23	24	30	32	47	28	25	166	6	89	58	58	24	634
Appointments - group, individual, initial contacts in April	202	110	226	287	72	135	121	144	207	202	156	181	161	151	2,355

Appendix 2: HSE South West - CDNTs Wholetime Equivalent (WTE) Posts Approved, Filled & Vacant as at 30 April 2025

	Approved WTEs Apr 2024	Approved WTEs Apr 2025	Filled WTEs Apr 2025	Vacant WTEs Apr 2025
Dietitians	3.50	3.50	2.40	1.1
Management / Admin	40.96	45.45	39.26	6.19
Nursing	16.05	14.30	10.74	3.56
Occupational Therapy	57.58	65.98	50.13	15.85
Other Disciplines	23.63	23.64	17.19	6.45
Physiotherapy	33.39	33.39	24.32	9.07
Psychology	50.59	50.54	42.24	8.3
Social Workers	31.91	30.91	25.51	5.4
Speech & Language Therapy	68.41	72.20	54.80	17.4
Therapy Assistants	15.35	19.73	17.82	1.91
	341.37	359.64	284.41	75.23

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(f) on Agenda refers:

"I am calling on the HSE to increase services for children with special needs such as speech and language, physiotherapy, psychology, psychiatrists and Occupational Therapists"

Cllr Danny Collins

Children's Disability Network Teams Services

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

There are 14 CDNTs across the HSE South West each located within the Community Healthcare Network areas. Each CDNT is managed by one of the Section 38 or 39 Lead Agencies; Brothers of Charity, Horizons (Section 38), CoAction, Enable Ireland and St Joseph's Foundation (Section 39).

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

CDNTs provide three types of evidence-informed support provided for children and families; Universal Support, Targeted Support and Individual Support. Each child is unique and our teams work with them and their families to offer the best supports for their individual needs.

CDNT Caseload

Each CDNT has an active caseload with a waitlist for their *Initial Contact* pathway – see **Appendix 1** for breakdown of current caseload and waitlist across the 14 CDNTs in HSE South West and appointments offered in April 2025.

Across all 14 CDNTs therapists are employed to provide therapeutic intervention for the children on their caseloads. Over the last 12 months the number of therapists employed across the 14 CDNTs has increased by 18.27 WTE. Nevertheless families continue to experience delays where vacant posts exist. CDNT staffing figures are provided in **Appendix 2**. The HSE is working with the lead agencies to address approved vacant posts.

CDNT support children attending both special schools and mainstream schools. Ten percent (10%) of children with complex disability needs are enrolled in special schools; ninety percent (90%) enrolled in mainstream schools and some children do

not attend school. Children attending special schools may have complex learning needs but not necessarily complex health needs.

Special Schools Pilot Programme

Six special schools in Cork have been included in a national pilot programme to provide occupational therapy, speech & language therapy and behaviour supports on-site in special schools. These supports are being delivered collaboratively by Children's Disability Network Teams and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

As of April 2025 all therapy posts approved under the pilot scheme for the 6 schools in Cork have been filled, with therapists now on site in all schools delivering therapy / supports as set out in the scope of the pilot, see **Appendix 3** for details of the schools participating in the pilot and the number of WTE therapist posts assigned to each school.

HSE South West and its lead agency partners are committed to participation in this pilot programme and is represented on the national steering group by the Head of Disability Services.

Primary Care Services

Primary Care (PC) services see children with non-complex needs for Speech & Language Therapy (SLT), Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) and Psychology. The waiting times for these services vary, based on referral demand and staffing resources.

New resources were allocated from Enhanced Community Care to PC Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) services in 2020 and 2021 but these were principally directed to adult services in the context of delivering care at home to support hospital avoidance as well as stated objectives of maintaining people well at home. In 2021 2 x Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) and 2x Occupational Therapy (OT) posts were funded locally (Staff grade and Senior) for children with disability non-complex needs.

With regards to psychology staffing resources, the last uplift by way national funding in core staffing was in late 2017 and comprised of 7 staff grade psychologists and 16 Assistant Psychology posts. As part of National waitlist initiatives, there has been an activity-based model of funding approved since late 2021. The CHO is reimbursed per child seen and discharged from the cohort of children longest waiting. In 2021 1 x Senior and 1 x Staff grade psychologist were approved from local funding to address the changing demand in and increased referrals.

Further to the lifting of the recruitment pause in July 2024, the HSE South West is now operating under the Pay and Numbers Strategy 2024. Funding to fill all vacant psychology posts was approved and recruitment is actively progressing.

The HSE South West along with the other RHAs has contributed to National submissions to the estimates process for increased resources for children.

Julie O Neill
Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West

Regional Health Forum Meeting - 5th June 2025

Appendix 1: HSE South West - CDNT Caseload, Initial Contact Waitlist and Appointments provided as at 30/04/2025.

	CDNT 1	CDNT 2	CDNT 3	CDNT 4	CDNT 5	CDNT 6	CDNT 7	CDNT 8	CDNT 9	CDNT 10	CDNT 11	CDNT 12	CDNT 13	CDNT 14	TOTALS
Caseload - April	391	437	594	750	452	445	558	503	449	814	459	712	722	455	7,741
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Appendix 2: HSE South West - CDNTs Wholetime Equivalent (WTE) Posts Approved, Filled & Vacant as at 30 April 2025

	Approved WTEs Apr 2024	Approved WTEs Apr 2025	Filled WTEs Apr 2025	Vacant WTEs Apr 2025
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Management / Admin	40.96	45.45	39.26	6.19
Nursing	16.05	14.30	10.74	3.56
Occupational Therapy	57.58	65.98	50.13	15.85
Other Disciplines	23.63	23.64	17.19	6.45
Physiotherapy	33.39	33.39	24.32	9.07
Psychology	50.59	50.54	42.24	8.3
Social Workers	31.91	30.91	25.51	5.4
Speech & Language Therapy	68.41	72.20	54.80	17.4
Therapy Assistants	15.35	19.73	17.82	1.91
	341.37	359.64	284.41	75.23

Appendix 3 : HSE South West Enhanced In-school Therapy Supports Pilot

School	Lead Agency	Student Numbers	Pilot allocation Senior Grade	Recruitment and Current Services - 2025 Pilot Update
Carrigaline Special School - Phase 1	Brothers of Charity	48	0.5 SLT 0.5 OT	- Senior SLT – commenced 03.12.2024 - Senior OT – commenced 04.02.2025 <i>Both staff are onsite in the school 3 hrs / day.</i>
Rochestown Special School - Phase 1	Enable Ireland	35 (48 from Sept 2024)	0.5 OT 0.5 SLT	- Senior OT – commenced 06.01.2025 - Senior SLT – commenced 09.12.2024 <i>Both staff are onsite in the school 3 hrs / day.</i>
Our Lady of Good Counsel Special School - Phase 1	Enable Ireland	68	0.7 OT 0.7 SLT	- Senior OT – commenced 06.01.2025 - Senior SLT – commenced 20.01.2025 <i>Both staff are onsite in the school 4 hrs / day.</i>
St Paul's Special School – Phase 1	Horizons	95 (97 from Sept 2024)	1.0 SLT 1.0 OT	- Senior SLT – commenced 13.01.2025 - Senior OT – commenced 18.03.2025 <i>Both staff onsite in the school 5 hrs 40 mins /day.</i>
St. Killian's Special School - Phase 2	Horizons	90	1.0 SLT 1.0 OT	- Senior SLT – commenced 03.03.2025 - Senior OT – commenced 07.04.2025 <i>Both staff onsite in the school 5 hrs 40 mins /day.</i>
Carrigtohill Educate Together - Phase 2	Brothers of Charity	TBC	0.5 OT 0.5 SLT	- Senior OT – commenced 24.02.25 - Senior SLT – commenced 14.04.25 <i>Both staff are onsite in the school 3 hrs / day</i>

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(g) on Agenda refers:

"I am calling on the Hse to reduce the long waiting times and lists for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) sufferers."

Cllr John Fleming

The Regional Pain Service at University Hospital Waterford (UHW) receives referrals from patients across 5 counties in the South East. This population (approximately 550,000) contributes to the ongoing demand for Pain Relief Services with patients being referred to UHW for a wide range of issues.

Up until July 2024, UHW had 1 Pain Consultant for patients requiring access to Pain Relief Services. As of July 2024, UHW now has 2 Consultant Pain Specialists, and although the demand still outweighs the capacity, UHW are seeing more patients than ever before. The service now also has the addition of an Advanced Nurse Practitioner who works alongside the Consultant.

UHW also completed some in-house out of hours clinics to help reduce the longest waiting patients.

The National Treatment Purchase Fund are also carrying out an ongoing outpatient waitlist validation exercise on all outpatient waitlists.

UHW are currently considering any potential options to optimise service delivery and reduce wait lists.

**Sinead Reynolds
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Waterford/Wexford
HSE Dublin and South East**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(h) on Agenda refers:

"That the HSE investigate the Western Australian Autism Association's approach to wrap around autism supports for children and how they could be integrated into the Irish system."

Cllr Daniel Pender

Thank you for highlighting the Western Australian Autism Association's approach to wrap around autism supports for children. We are aware of these services which are renowned as leading services within the Australian context. We briefly summarise these, highlight existing overlaps with our own service model, and note differences between the two in relation to the Irish system.

The idea of "wrap around" services is that they provide holistic, personalised and community supports to both individuals and families; they are strengths-based and seek to build community supports.

Australia launched its first National Autism Strategy in January 2025, in line with countries such as UK, Canada and Ireland that already have such a strategy. This strategy is intended to further strengthen work with autistic youth, including in Western Australia.

The Autism Association of Western Australia has delivered training to improve people's experience in emergency healthcare settings, to oral health students to improve their communication skills, and community hubs to provide wraparound mental health and development services.

In Western Australia CliniKids has spearheaded much of the work around Early Start Denver Model therapy (ESDM) and JASPER the Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Engagement and Regulation (JASPER) therapies.

The **Early Start Denver Model** (ESDM) is aimed at children in the 1-5 age range, providing intensive, naturalistic, and play-based intervention for autistic children. The programme is based on principles of applied behaviour analysis (e.g. shaping, prompting, and fading techniques) and developmental psychology (especially recognising different developmental trajectories across children), targeting cognitive, communicative, social-emotional, play and self-care skills, through therapy centered on play-based interactions and real-life activities. It

involves both one-to-one therapy sessions and parent training in ESDM techniques to support extending and developing interventions at home.

The ESDM model is described on the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, "What Works" website here:

[https://whatworks.gov.ie/hub-](https://whatworks.gov.ie/hub-search/report/12/Early%20Start%20Denver%20Model)

[search/report/12/Early%20Start%20Denver%20Model](https://whatworks.gov.ie/hub-search/report/12/Early%20Start%20Denver%20Model)

It has an Evidence Rating of 3 which means it has been categorised as having "evidence of a short-term positive impact from at least one rigorous evaluation – that is, where a judgment about causality can be made." The rating is made on a 5 point scale (with 0 = not effective), with a rating of 4 (top rating) reserved for programmes with demonstrated long-term effects.

The Cost Rating is 5 which indicates a high cost, with an estimated unit cost of more than €2375" per intervention. 5 is the highest cost rating on the scale. The therapy requires intensive therapist input over several years, ideally supplemented with parental input.

Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Engagement & Regulation (JAPER) is therapy

designed for preschool and school-aged who have differences in play and social communication skills, including for autistic children. Like ESDM it uses behavioural and development psychology principles in a naturalistic way, one-to-one sessions, 1-3 times a week. JASPER can be administered by clinicians, educators, and parents across various settings, including homes and schools. JASPER is not rated on the What Works site. However it has shorter intervention times for a set time period of around three months.

Nonetheless there is evidence supporting the effectiveness of JASPER (see for instance, Waddington et al, The effects of JASPER intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review. Autism. 2021 Nov;25(8):2370-2385.)

In each of these therapies intervention follows assessment that directly evaluates the issues to be addressed. This is in addition to any diagnostic assessment as diagnostic assessments do not necessarily provide information about a child's service needs.

Professor Andrew Whitehouse, Director of Clinicids and Professor of Autism Research, has been a driving force behind service innovations in Western Australia. Despite the success of these services he is quoted in April, 2025 article in Medical Forum as follows:

"One of the things we do know is that we have large waiting lists to receive assessment services, which means kids can be on a waitlist for two to three years before they are able to access these services,"

"The demand for services has outstripped the supply of clinicians multiple fold, and we're at the point now where it's difficult to see how we could ever train the amount of clinicians we would require to meet the demand for assessment services".

"For many people, achieving a diagnosis has been the gateway to getting support, which is why waitlists have been driven so high. We all realise the flaw in that, so we need systems to provide services to kids based on their needs and their level of functional impact, not necessarily the presence or absence of a diagnosis."

The Irish Situation

In the Irish system a diagnosis has also been a gateway - but this is now under review as part of the Education for Person with Special Needs Act (EPSEN, 2004) review process – for access to supports and to special classes or special schools. This is not to deny the value of a diagnosis for many people, but rather to recognise that a diagnosis alone is insufficient to determine a person's service needs.

The Autism Assessment and Intervention Pathways Protocol ('autism protocol') to be implemented later in 2025, while providing a diagnosis, also requires clinicians to provide a formulation and identify strengths and difficulties, and associated service requirements. The development of a *formulation*, considering the 5 Ps (Presenting problem, Predisposing factors, Precipitating factors, Perpetuating factors, and Protective factors), is an element of the new autism protocol and very much chimes with the behaviour analyses approach of the both ESDM and JASPER.

The collaborative element of ESDM and JASPER is also central to the Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) introduced in 2023 as a person-centred service innovation within Children's Disability Network Teams. An IFSP is made by the child (as appropriate to their age), their family and the CDNT in partnership. The plan brings together the child's and family's experiences, needs, priorities and desired outcomes, with the team's knowledge and expertise, in order to agree on priorities for interventions, how these will be delivered and assessed, and by when. The plan can be updated at any time to reflect changes in priorities and goals, supports and strategies. Again, it's strongly collaborative element ties in with the ethos of the ESDM and JASPER, as does the important role that parents and other family members and supporters can play in providing and supporting interventions.

At present, due to the long waiting times for autism assessment, the number of staff involved in these assessments, and in Assessment of Need, and under-staffing of teams, the level of interventions that can be provided often falls short of that described in usual applications of ESDM and JASPER.

The autism protocol contributes to addressing this problem by aligning the clarity of a person's presentation with the intensity of assessment required to understand the presentation. At the discretion of the assessing clinicians, this allows for a shorter assessment time when possible, thus freeing up more clinical time for interventions. This tiered approach to autism assessment is also used in Australia, allowing more complex presentations to similarly receive more intensive assessment.

As with the case in Western Australia our waiting times are very unsatisfactory averaging over 3 years and this means that important developmental opportunities are being missed for many children on these waiting lists.

As well as developing the autism protocol the Service Improvement Programme for the Autistic Community has also developed Autism Awareness Training (which is also relevant to other types of neurodiversity) focusing on understanding and communicating with autistic people, and especially in health and social care service settings.

With better staffed community teams we would be able to provide a better level of service, closer to that provided in Western Australia. Our services share a similar ethos and have complimentary elements. The next stage of work of the Service Improvement Programme for the Autistic Community is to identify the range of effective interventions that can be used (many of which currently are being used) to support autistic people, and to evaluate these in terms of their effectiveness, staffing requirements and costs. We are always open to learning about new and different approaches and welcome being pointed to other models which we may be unaware of.

**Mr John Firtzmaurice,
Chairperson of Service Improvement Programme Board
Health Services Executive**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(i) on Agenda refers:

“Can the members be supplied with the details of planned upgrades and repairs in the Cashel Ward servicing pediatrics in UHK?”

Cllr Deirdre Ferris

A plan is in place to repair the pipework in the Cashel Ward at University Hospital Kerry in the coming weeks. The work will be carried out in two phases, with the decanting of the ward also occurring in two stages to ensure a smooth transition. This project should take approximately ten weeks to complete.

Julie O'Neill
Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(j) on Agenda refers:

"That the GAA field at Derrynane GAA in Caherdaniel be added as a landing spot for air ambulance and coast guard air-activity."

Cllr Norma Moriarty

Having forwarded your query to the NAS General Manager with responsibility for Heli-Ops, I am pleased to advise you that the NAS will review the suitability of the proposed location at V23 TX20. NAS will undertake an initial ground reconnaissance before proceeding to an aerial reconnaissance with the NAS, Air Corps and Coastguard Helicopters. All pre-determined Landing sites have to be surveyed by Aeromedical Service Providers prior to approval as a designated LZ. The reason for a survey is lighting, netting and structures including road access and egress all need to be fully assessed and be accepted for all types of aircraft used for Aeromedical missions in Ireland.

Rob Moriarty
General Manager
National Ambulance Service

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(k) on Agenda refers:

"That following the transfer of patients from Killarney Community Hospital to the new facility that the HSE would invest serious funding in refurbishing the Community Hospital to provide much needed respite services for the people of Kerry. Many people who are caring for their loved ones with a disability at home cannot access respite services due to severe shortage of such facilities in Kerry."

Cllr. Marie Moloney

The HSE and its funded agencies provide respite care for children and adults with disabilities. Respite can occur in a variety of settings and for various lengths of time, depending on the needs of the individual service user, their family or carer and according to available resources.

HSE South West Disability Services operates separate Children and Adult Regional Respite Forums. Each forum manages the referrals and respite service provision for the population of the region. The overall purpose of each forum is to ensure equitable access to respite services, consistent with each person's assessed need and preference. Service provider representatives and Disability Services personnel comprise membership of the Regional Respite Fora.

HSE South West Disability Services is acutely aware of the demand for respite services. HSE South West has significantly invested in respite in recent years. The type and quantum of respite has been increased each year to meet the assessed needs and preferences of as many people as possible. In 2019 funding of €6.4m was allocated to respite services in Cork and Kerry, and in 2024 the allocated funding was €12.4m representing an almost 100% increase in funding allocation for respite services in the 6 year period.

HSE South West Disability Services continues to invest in respite services, proactively seeking alternative respite models and utilise all available funding to provide respite services for all children and adults who require them. HSE South West Disability Services are working with service providers to create new residential and alternative respite supports for children and adults in 2025 and welcomes any additional funding to continue to invest in these vital services.

HSE South West Disability Services provide a range of alternative respite models for children and adults. These include afterschool clubs; in home support for children and adults; outreach supports and holiday breaks for adults. These options ensure that respite is provided in the manner which best meets the needs of children/ adults and their families.

Children's Residential Respite Services Kerry:

Kerry residential respite services for children aged between 6 and 18 years of age is delivered by St. John of God Services. There are two residential respite houses, one in North Kerry and one in South Kerry. Each house has 4 respite beds and operates 7 days per week with planned closures during the year.

Adult Residential Respite Services:

Kerry residential respite services for adults who are aged 18 years to 65 years (at the age of entry) is delivered in two respite houses, one in North Kerry and one in South Kerry.

Duagh Heights is operated by Orchard Care Group. This service is currently in the process of opening after the procurement process was completed in March 2025. This replaces the service previously delivered by Kerry Parents & Friends Association at Cois na Feile, and is a much needed enhancement of respite availability in Kerry.

The second adult respite house is Cúnamh Iveragh in Caherciveen (South Kerry). Cúnamh Iveragh opened in December 2023.

Duagh Heights: A tendering process to identify a new provider for this respite house was completed in March 2025. The service is currently completing assessments of all people that previously accessed Cois na Feile. This is a four bed - seven days per week adult respite service for people with disabilities in the North Kerry area. HSE Disability Services will work with providers in the area to ensure that the Cois na Feile property is utilised to provide enhanced supports for people with disabilities in Kerry.

Cúnamh Iveragh – Operated by Dovidá (formerly Home Instead), has four beds and is open three nights per week for 42 weeks per year (excluding bank holiday weekends).

In addition to the two regional respite houses for Kerry there are an additional six beds for adult respite:

- Four in Brook Lodge in Listowel,
- One in Tearmann Lodge in Rathmore
- One in Glebe Lodge in Castleisland.

These are historical respite beds provided by Kerry Parents and Friends Association and support adults attending KPFA services.

Alternative Respite Services:

Respite is not always overnight and can be provided in a number of ways including centre based *Day Only Respite*. Respite is a vital part of the continuum of services for families, potentially helping to prevent out-of-home full-time residential placements, preserving the family unit, and supporting family stability.

Recent funding has enabled the HSE, with the support of respite providers, to start a weekend club in Kerry. This club provides respite to approximately twenty children on a rotational fortnightly basis. Families are free to choose a morning or afternoon session which lasts for approximately three hours.

Community Hospital Killarney

Construction of the new Community Nursing Unit in Killarney is substantially completed but we await a final completion date from the PPP Company and HSE National Estates. Based on the information available to the Older Persons Service Management Team from our Estates colleagues it is estimated that the completion date is likely to be during Q3 2025.

The timeline for when the building is expected to become operational is dependent on handover of the new building by the PPP Company and subsequent registration by management at the unit. Registration cannot be applied for until full handover of the completed building has taken place. We anticipate that the time frame from submission of the application to inspection by HIQA will be approximately six weeks.

Once the building is officially registered, we will be in a position to move from St. Columbanus to the new building and it is envisaged that there will be a phased transfer of residents from St. Columbanus and Killarney Community Hospital into the new facility. Transfer of services to the new unit will take place as soon as possible following completion of the operational phases outlined above.

As the members will be aware, the new Minor Injury Unit which is planned for the Kerry area will be located in the grounds of the St Columbanus Home / Killarney Community Hospital campus. The space requirements and needs of the services in the Kerry area are currently being reviewed by HSE Estates in conjunction with service management and Public Health. We await the outcome of this review and it will inform any decision on the future use of the remaining available space on the Killarney Community Hospital / St. Columbanus campus.

Julie O Neill

**Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West**

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Motion 4(I) on Agenda refers:

“Could I have an update on the Primary Care Centre in Glanmire?”

Cllr Margaret McDonnell

The establishment of robust primary care centre infrastructure in specific geographical areas is crucial for providing integrated care. These centres serve as the cornerstone of the healthcare system, facilitating seamless coordination among various healthcare services. By situating primary care centres within the communities they serve, we can ensure that patients have convenient access to comprehensive care, encompassing preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services. This localised approach not only enhances patient outcomes as directed in Slaintecare through timely and effective interventions but also fosters strong patient-provider relationships, promoting continuity of care. Moreover, well-equipped primary care centres can alleviate the burden on tertiary healthcare facilities by addressing health issues at an early stage, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and sustainable healthcare system.

I wish to advise that the Glanmire Primary Care Centre planning application was rejected by Cork County Council and the developers have lodged an appeal to An Bord Pleanala.

Sonya Cotter
Integrated Healthcare Manager Cork North and East
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(a) on Agenda refers:

"Noting that there were 86 less public health nurses in 2024 than there were at the end of 2020 - a six per cent decrease - and that the 2018 Health Service Capacity Review found there would be a 46 per cent increase in demand for public health nurse appointments by 2031. Can the HSE reveal whether there is adequate Public Health Nurses serving the Carlow/Kilkenny area and, if necessary, what measures are being implemented to ensure full recruitment?"

Cllr Adrienne Wallace

The Carlow/Kilkenny area has a Public Health Nurse (PHN) in each of the 40 geographical areas, spread over 20 Health Centres and serving a population of 143,466 people.

There are currently 48.6 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) PHNs based in Carlow and Kilkenny (Staff Census March 2025) with 8.6 WTE Public Health Nurses covering Specialist Posts such as immunisations, schools, continence and disabilities.

It is acknowledged that there are increasing service demands, an ageing population, growing levels of complex cases in the community and issues such as obesity and poor housing conditions.

Public Health posts are filled as follows:

- (i) National Public Health Nursing Transfer Panel
- (ii) Student Public Health Nurse Sponsorship Programme

Sponsorship is available for nurses who want to become [public health nurses \(PHNs\)](#). The programme runs for 1 academic year starting September each year and involves a national joint application process between the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the HSE. These students commence as Registered General Nurses pending their registration with the Nursing Midwifery Board. There are 3 student PHNs due to qualify in September 2025 for the Carlow Kilkenny area.

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(b) on Agenda refers:

"How many children in Cork County are awaiting a CAMHS referral? What is the average wait time? How many children are currently availing of support from CAMHS in Cork County?"

Cllr Ann Bambury

CAMHS community services in HSE Southwest are delivered across 10 community sector teams, as well as a specialist Child and Adolescent Regional Eating Disorder Services (CAREDS) team, a regional specialist ADHD waitlist initiative team and a Regional Mental Health and Intellectual Disability teams. 8 of the 10 community teams are based in Cork city and county.

The table hereunder details the totals on the waiting list per team in Cork and the total number of open cases per team in Cork as of April 2025:

April 2025	North Cork	North Lee North	North Lee East	North Lee West	South Lee 1	South Lee 2	South Lee 3	West Cork	CAREDS	Totals
Total on waiting list	249	101	57	73	129	37	197	91	16	950
Open cases as at end APR 2025	235	246	140	161	172	74	145	216	62	1451

The table hereunder details the average waiting time by region:

Region	Average Waiting Time (months)
North Cork	10.98
North Lee North	8.24
North Lee East	9.24
North Lee West	7.05
South Lee 1	13.01
South Lee 2	12.12
South Lee 3	15.49
West Cork	5.85
CAREDS	1.88

We acknowledge that high demand for CAMHS services leading to long wait times for initial assessments and treatment from the multi-disciplinary team. Unfortunately this is compounded by recruitment difficulties and a shortage of CAMHS mental health professionals, particularly in rural areas.

Julie O'Neill
Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(c) on Agenda refers:

“Have the HSE any plans to establish a specialised clinic in the South East to deal with patients suffering from Cataracts”

Cllr Roger Kennedy

We recognise that there is a significant waiting list for cataract surgery in the South East Region. University Hospital Waterford are working to reduce their waiting times, and in this regard, they are currently offering additional Ophthalmology Twilight Clinics, specifically targeting long-waiting patients.

Two Consultant Ophthalmologists have recently been approved for recruitment, one to IHA Waterford Wexford and one to IHA Carlow Kilkenny, South Tipperary. This is a new development in line with the National Clinical Programme for Ophthalmology – Model of Eye Care (May 2025). Additionally, approval has been given to recruit two locums while we await permanent consultant appointments.

The Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital (RVEEH) located in IHA Dublin South and Wicklow have recently increased their capacity for cataract surgery and have a dedicated cataract unit for surgery. After being listed for surgery, the current wait time for surgery is approximately 3 months.

Working with the RVEEH the Primary Care Eye Team (PCET) in IHA Dublin South and Wicklow have recently piloted a clinic for new patient cataract, which is optometry led. The optometrist initially sees the patient and then they either see the consultant in a review for listing for cataract surgery, are discharged, or are referred to another clinic type. The pilot resulted in 50% of patients seeing the consultant and all are being listed for surgery. PCET are going to continue this pilot over July and August and if successful it should double the cataract patients being assessed in the PCET and increase the referrals for surgery and reduce the wait time from referral to surgery for all patients within the IHA Dublin and South Wicklow.

Following this pilot review, the PCET will further discuss with the Clinical Lead at RVEEH as to having a regional approach to reducing the waiting lists and potentially having similar clinics operating in the South East feeding into RVEEH cataract unit. While we acknowledge that resources are not consistent across all IHA areas in HSE Dublin and South East we plan to establish a regional Ophthalmology group to optimise processes and access to regional ophthalmology.

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

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipp
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(d) on Agenda refers:

“Why is autism not classed as a medical condition in order for a GP to get involved.”

Cllr John Fleming

In Ireland, GPs often have an important role in identifying autism spectrum disorders (hereafter collectively referred to as autism) in children. They are often the first point of contact for individuals and families who suspect autism, and they can make referrals for formal diagnostic assessments.

In Integrated Healthcare Area (IHA) Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South and IHA Waterford Wexford, if a GP sees a patient and has a query of autism they can refer to the Children’s Disability Network Team (CDNT) or Primary Care Autism Assessment Team (PCAAT) for a multidisciplinary assessment depending on the level of complexity of a child. Once the assessment is complete a copy of the report is returned to the referring GP.

The Health Service Executive (HSE) in Ireland has implemented a comprehensive autism programme, which includes a tiered assessment model, awareness raising campaigns, and support services for autistic individuals and their families.

The Professional Practice Guidelines for the Assessment, Formulation, and Diagnosis of Autism in Children and Adolescents (April 2022) published by the Psychological Society of Ireland acknowledges the rapid evolution in the understanding of autism over recent years whereby autism awareness, understanding, research and practice has changed considerably, both internationally and within the Irish context.

Autism is generally understood as a neurodevelopmental difference, rather than a medical disorder in the traditional sense, emphasising that it is a natural variation in human brain function.

The historical categorisation of autism as a 'disorder' necessitated evidence of significant impairments in daily life. With the emerging neurodiversity paradigm and the social model of disability, it is recognised that autism can result in fluctuating levels of disability depending on the demands of the neurotypical world and available environmental supports.

Autism assessments in the South East reflect the changing approach to autism assessments incorporating a neuroaffirming and social model of disability approach.

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

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(e) on Agenda refers:

“What supports is the HSE providing to those being diagnosed as neurodivergent later in life”

Cllr Daniel Pender

Neurodivergence in adults refers to the presence of neurodevelopmental conditions like autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, or dyscalculia, which can affect how a person thinks, learns, and interacts with the world. It is an umbrella term for individuals whose brains function differently than what is considered typical, but these differences do not necessarily indicate a problem or a need for intervention.

Neurodiversity and Health Services

The HSE provides a range of services for neurodivergent adults. It should be noted that neurodiversity includes those people receiving health and social care services across care groups in disability, primary care and mental health, and as such is not exclusive to disability services.

Disability Services

Disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type of disability or service required.

The support needs provided to neurodivergent individuals are based on individualised assessment of the specific need and its clinical significance. The focus for Adult Disability Services is to provide support for adults that have received a diagnosis of a disability and or/autism.

The HSE also offers day services for adults with disabilities, including those with autism or intellectual disabilities.

Mental Health Service ADHD Services for Adults

The National Clinical Programme (NCP) applies to adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is a common neuro-developmental disorder

with 3 core symptoms (inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity). The Programme is delivered as part of the HSE's mental health service provision and across government departments to ensure a holistic, integrated, person-centred response to adults with ADHD.

In 2025 HSE Dublin and South East Region our Mental Health Services received national funding approval to develop an Adult ADHD Team to serve Integrated Healthcare Area Waterford Wexford and IHA Carlow Kilkenny and South Tipperary areas. This funding will allow for the recruitment of a Consultant, Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Clinical Nurse Specialist and administrative support. Recruitment of these posts is being prioritised with a view (subject to successful recruitment) to having in place in Quarter 3 2025.

Other Supports

Neurodivergent adults can access various resources and support for diagnosis and services, including advocacy from organisations like AsIAm and Neurodiversity Ireland.

Autism Innovation Strategy

The National Autism Innovation Strategy launched in August 2024 provides a framework for cross-government action on autism over the next 18 months, and seeks to complement wider disability policy, by focusing on areas where there are bespoke needs for autistic people. The strategy aims to improve inclusion and create a neuro-affirmative environment

Roseanne Killeen
Integrated Healthcare Manager
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary
HSE Dublin and South East

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(f) on Agenda refers:

“Can I get a list of all vacant HSE owned properties in Kerry please?”

Cllr Deirdre Ferris

Vacant Kerry Property		
Item	TRIRIGA	HSE Property Address
1	KY0003	46 Charles Street, Listowel, Co. Kerry V31 Y068
2	KY0006	PEMBROKE STREET TRALEE V92 P309
3	KY0009	Scarriff Health Centre, Waterville, Co. Kerry - Eircode V23 DA50
4	KY0024	19 Denny Street V92 YC94
5	KY0030	BALLINSKELLIGS HEALTH CENTRE V23 DR94
6	KY0045	DINGLE DISTRICT HOSP old Former Old Dingle Hospital & Workhouse
7	KY0045	DINGLE HLTH CENTRE V92 TX90
8	KY0124	SURPLUS LAND AT MONAVALLEY
9	KY0037	GNEEVEGUILLA SLIABH LUACHRA ESTATE
10	KY0025	CLAHANE RADIO STATION
11	KY0016	ST FINANS HOSP. (LAND) Ballydribbeen Gate House
12	KY0014	Rathmore Health Centre
13	KY0010	Kenmare Health Centre
14	KY0050	Knocknagoshel Radio Repeater Station - Stacks Mountain Radio Station V92 XY33

The HSE locally is currently working through the Land Development Agency (LDA) and the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform processes for the disposal of properties which are surplus to requirements. As a matter of policy, no property is disposed of until there is absolute certainty that there is no alternative State use for that property. If, at the end of that process, no alternative State use has been identified for the property, it will be offered for sale on the open market.

Daniel Clifford
Director of Estates Department
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(g) on Agenda refers:

“Can we get an update on progress in securing an ambulance base in Killorglin to help serve the Iveragh peninsula and alleviate the pressure on the Cahersiveen base?”

Cllr Norma Moriarty

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) have engaged with the IHA manager and HSE Estates to identify a suitable HSE owned building in Killorglin, and create a fourth Ambulance dispatch point in South Kerry. We have identified a building and I hope that agreement can be reached with existing stakeholders to allow NAS commence service delivery in the coming weeks. Within our current resource level, it will be possible to provide a day only (0800-2000) Patient Transporting Resource, in line with demand, and a single Paramedic in a Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) on a limited number of nights. It is my intent that this will represent an initial step towards increased service delivery and it will be augmented by additional Paramedic Posts that I have sought for the South Kerry region in the 2026 New Service Posts (NSP) submission.

Rob Moriarty
General Manager
National Ambulance Service

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(h) on Agenda refers:

"Can the HSE confirm that they are 100% committed to building a Primary Care Centre on the grounds of the Aras Padraig. There is much speculation as whether or not the HSE will build on this site."

Cllr Marie Moloney

The HSE wishes to confirm that we are fully committed to the building a Primary Care Centre on the grounds of Aras Padraig. There has been a number of previous attempts to provide a Primary Care facility in Killarney, with little positive results on same.

The provision of a Primary Care facility on the grounds of Áras Phádraig site is a joint venture planning application with Kerry County Council. Both the HSE and Kerry County Council officials are of the opinion that the provision of the Theatre and a Primary Care facility on the same site in an urban setting will be complementary to each development from a planning and sustainability view point. Once planning permission has been successful, it will take approximately 3 years to complete.

Julie O'Neill
Integrated Healthcare Manager Kerry
HSE South West

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

5th June 2025

To the Chairperson and Each Member of the Forum

Dear Member,

Question 5(i) on Agenda refers:

“Could I have an update on the Primary Care Centre in Mayfield?”

Cllr Margaret McDonnell

The establishment of robust primary care centre infrastructure in specific geographical areas is crucial for providing integrated care. These centres serve as the cornerstone of the healthcare system, facilitating seamless coordination among various healthcare services. By situating primary care centres within the communities they serve, we can ensure that patients have convenient access to comprehensive care, encompassing preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services. This localised approach not only enhances patient outcomes as directed in Slaintecare through timely and effective interventions but also fosters strong patient-provider relationships, promoting continuity of care. Moreover, well-equipped primary care centres can alleviate the burden on tertiary healthcare facilities by addressing health issues at an early stage, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and sustainable healthcare system.

HSE Estates and Capital have confirmed that the Mayfield/Ballyvolane Primary Care Centre has been lodged for planning permission. A request for further information from the Developer is currently being compiled; once completed it will be issued to the planning department.

Sonya Cotter
Integrated Healthcare Manager Cork North and East
HSE South West

MINUTES OF MEETINGS 2025

MINUTES **MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 27th February 2025 at 11am
Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern **Chairperson**

Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Liam Brazil
Cllr Tomas Breathnach*
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Caroline Cronin
Cllr Pat Dunphy
Cllr Deirdre Ferris*
Cllr Dominic Finn
Cllr John Fleming
Cllr Ger Frisby
Cllr Finbarr Harrington
Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae*
Cllr Peter Horgan
Cllr Fiona Kerins

Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Margaret McDonnell
Cllr Norma Moriarty
Cllr Marie Murphy*
Cllr John O'Leary
Cllr Tony O'Shea
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Daniel Pender
Cllr John Sheehan*
Cllr Mikey Sheehy
Cllr Frank Staples
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

*** attended online**

Apologies:

Cllr Ann Bambury
Cllr Danny Collins
Cllr Roger Kennedy
Cllr Marie Moloney

In Attendance:

Ms Bridie O'Sullivan, Director of Nursing and Midwifery, South/South West Hospitals Group
Ms Mari O'Donovan, Head of Primary Care, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
Ms Derval Howley, Head of Service, Health and Wellbeing, HSE Dublin and South East
Dr Sinead Reynolds, IHA Manager, HSE Dublin and South East*
Ms Emma Finn, Regional Director of Communications and Public Affairs,
HSE Dublin and South East*
Members of the HSE Regional Health Forum South staff

*** attended online**

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 7th November 2024

On the proposal of Cllr Coonan seconded by Cllr Frisby the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 7th November 2024 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence
There was no Chairpersons correspondence.

3. Committees
The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (a)** South East Committee Meeting held on 8th April 2025 in Kilkenny
- (b)** South West Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2025 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

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

"The length of time it take for someone to get through to the local Caredoc. This was an issue again over the Christmas period. Apparently it is a centralised system with over 20 taking calls but it is not fit for purpose."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

As with other health care services, Caredoc Out-of-hours GP service experienced a significant surge in demand over the Christmas and New Year period. Wait times can be frustrating, particularly during peak activity hours holiday periods, when demands are at their highest. It should be noted that the data highlighted the high proportion of patients accessed the service in the South East compared to the national average for this period.

Cllr Lenihan Foley supported the Motion and stating that there were similar issues experienced with SouthDoc in Cork.

Dr Howley highlighted that the surge in confluence of influenza, RSV, and gastrointestinal illness circulating in the community contributed to the increased demands and pressures on the entire healthcare system from ED, acute inpatient, General Practitioner and Out of Hours GP services. She advised Members that there continues to be high levels of flu and respiratory illness in the community and asked that they would continue to promote the uptake of Vaccinations.

Dr Howley also advised Members that Caredoc remained operational and continued to provide services during the two significant weather events including the Storm Eowyn (red warning) both of which led to service disruptions across the country.

(b) Cllr Pat Dunphy moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Update on the Primary Care Centre developments in Kilkenny City and County."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Dunphy thanked Management for their written response and welcomed primary care centre developments in Kilkenny. Cllr Dunphy referenced a presentation from HSE Estates at a recent South East Committee Meeting which was very well received. He asked for an update on the proposed developed to in Ballyhale Health Centre in Co. Kilkenny. Derval Howley advised that she would liaise with her colleagues in Estates and arrange for an update to be provided directly on this.

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

"Can the HSE provide a list of existing step-down services particular reference to the Carlow/Kilkenny area."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Coonan acknowledged the written response from the IHA Manager. He highlighted the need for increased step down services with an increasing population and pressure on acute hospital beds.

Dr Howley advised that beds in the public system are consistently monitored with updates on urgent and emergency care, analysis of delayed transfers of care, acute and community stepdown bed capacity. The winter surge does place additional pressures on the acute beds and nursing home facilities. Cllr Dunphy in support of this Motion also highlighted the need for appropriate aftercare and other community supports for frail older persons who need care at home or cannot go home alone. Dr Sinéad Reynolds Integrated Healthcare Manager advised members that they will continue to advocate for additional resources and supports.

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

"That the HSE establish an interim physiotherapy unit in East Cork until a permanent location is in place to accommodate the greater population east of Dunkettle."

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

Ms Mari O'Donovan informed members that two Primary Care Centres have been planned and approved. As an interim measure Physiotherapy Services are currently working out of the refurbished area in St Raphael's Centre, Youghal. Ms O'Donovan

asked Cllr Ahern to submit details of any individual concerns and that she would follow up on same.

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

"That this Forum calls for the standalone Chemotherapy Unit at University Hospital Kerry to be added to the HSE's priority capital list. If a new capital submission is required, this should be prepared as a matter of urgency, in light of the considerable time that has elapsed since the project was first initiated."

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Assistant National Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Sheehy thanked the Chairperson for her support with this matter. He outlined his disappointment at the apparent lack of progress on this project development in University Hospital Kerry. The care and treatment provided at the current unit is outstanding however the building is not appropriate or fit for purpose. Cllr Sheehy outlined that service users and their families are most appreciative for the services provided but a standalone building is required. He had written to HSE Management (Cork/Kerry) on this matter. Cllr Sheehy requested that the Forum write to the Minister for Health requesting that this matter be prioritised without further delay. Cllr Norma Moriarty supported the Motion and seconded the proposal to write to the Minister.

Ms Bridie O'Sullivan commended both Cllr Sheehy and Moriarty as two dedicated advocates of this project. She agreed with the need for this new build and noted their disappointment with the project development. Ms O'Sullivan outlined that there has been ongoing work to create additional bed capacity at UHK and that this project is a priority for HSE Capital Estates plans. Ms O'Sullivan thanked Cllr Sheehy and Cllr Foley and confirmed that she would take their concerns to the REO and Hospital Group Management and follow up on correspondence previously submitted by Cllr Sheehy.

(f) Cllr Fiona Kerins moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the HSE provide an update on the Medical Centre in Lehenaghmore, Cork."

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Assistant National Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Kerins asked when exactly will the Medical Centre will be operational. Ms O'Donovan in response advised that it was not possible to provide a definitive timeframe at present. However once an update is available she will arrange for this to be provided directly to Cllr Kerins.

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

"That the HSE would outline their plans for the HSE building located on O'Brien Street, Mallow."

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Assistant National Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr O'Shea acknowledged the written response. He advised members that there is significant work ongoing to tidy-up towns and villages across the area. This co-ordinated effort may also include derelict or unused buildings. As this HSE building is located in a prime location in Mallow town, it is causing concern and a timeframe on the plans for the building going on the open market would be appreciated. Ms O'Donovan advised that the HSE have a large portfolio of buildings and has to go through a specific disposal process for vacant / unwanted properties. Whilst there is no specific timeline yet for the disposal of this property, Ms O'Donovan will revert to Mr Daniel Clifford HSE Capital and Estates on this.

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

"That this Forum supports the urgent introduction of school therapists to all special schools in the Cork/Kerry area in a way that does not take from existing CDNT staff complements, in a time sensitive manner and further seeks the attendance of the Ministers for disability at the next forum to engage with Forum members on funding lines required to support such therapy supports for children in the Cork/Kerry area."

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

Cllr Horgan noting the written response asked to how many therapists were in place? Ms O'Donovan replied advising that recruitment process is ongoing, however there are difficulties in recruiting qualified therapists to these posts.

Cllr Horgan stated that the terms and conditions of contracts in these Section 39 organisations are impacting recruitment efforts. Employees in these organisations do not have the same pay and conditions as HSE-employed colleagues. Ms O'Donovan stated that there recruitment is challenging across all disciplines - there is a shortage of qualified healthcare staff nationally (and internationally). In addition geographical location and property prices in the school area are factors which may influence the take up of posts. Ms O'Donovan acknowledged the impact on children and their families in accessing services. As members are aware, the matter of pay and conditions for Section 39 workers is a national issue - it was proposed that the Forum write to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth of Ireland seeking these matters be resolved without further delay and to ensure these essential therapy supports and intervention are provided for children in the Cork/Kerry area. Cllr Moriarty seconded the Motion to write to the Minister.

(i) Cllr Daniel Pender moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To request an update on mental health supports in the Carlow and Kilkenny area."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Pender acknowledged the written response provided. He asked for further details and information on the planned capital developments.

Cllr Pender welcomed the development of the Eating Disorders Team. He noted that many of these new services were to be located in the Kilkenny area with people from Carlow required to travel and queried whether it would be possible to co-locate these services or provide outreach services.

In response Dr Sinéad Reynolds IHA Manager advised of the national Model of Care for Eating Disorders programme. Given the specialist nature of these services, it is necessary to ensure an appropriate level of each specialty to enable a functioning team to provide assessment and treatment.

Dr Reynolds also reported to members that as IHA Manager she and her colleagues would work to develop mental health services at primary care level across the region.

(j) Cllr Margaret McDonnell moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To ask the HSE to review the situation where a person applying for Home help hours in the South West area can avail of same for personal care hours as opposed to light house work or food preparation. In a lot of cases elderly people are not taking up on these hours as they are uncomfortable with a non-family members providing personal care but would really appreciate help in other areas."

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

Cllr McDonnell said that she had come across this issue through her work and whilst out meeting constituents during the election. Ms O'Donovan agreed that home support provision is an important service and essential for supporting people to continue living at home or who may support to return home following a stay in hospital. The focus of the home support service is to meet the identified clinical needs of clients in their homes. With increased service demands and staffing challenges (for HSE and Private Providers) there are waiting lists in operation. Therefore it is necessary to prioritise clinical needs and unfortunately it is not possible to provide assistance with domestic and housework duties.

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

"That a Crisis Team be established for Kerry as it is an area with very poor access to crisis mental health services and it requires the CT approach to be able to provide an effective service."

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

Cllr Moriarty thanked HSE Management for the response and suggested that her related Question be taken with this Motion. She was dissatisfied that this valid business case submission was not approved. The Crisis Nurse post would be closely associated with a Crisis Team. Ms O'Donovan advised that the new Health Regions and Integrated Healthcare areas are working to develop mental health services in relation to prevention, and when young people and / or adults experience crisis and to develop other alternative appropriate options to the Emergency Department. Ms

O'Donovan assured members that MHS and the IHA committed to advocating for additional posts and funding.

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

"What is the HSE's plan for both the District Hospital and Columbanus in Killarney when the new Community Hospital will open?"

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

Cllr Healy-Rae asked whether existing building on St Columbanus could be used for a Minor Injury Unit or will there be a new build for this service and about the staffing involved. He also outlined concerns about the numbers of beds in the new Community Nursing Unit building. Ms O'Donovan advised that schedule of accommodation will be developed for St Columbanus with reconfiguration of buildings where it is feasible. The HSE is continually reviewing need vis a vis service planning.

Cllr Moriarty also requested that there be a Day Procedures Clinic in addition to the Minor Injuries Unit to alleviate pressures at UHK. Ms Bridie O'Sullivan stated that there has been an overall increase in bed numbers and bed capacity in UHK. She acknowledged that unfortunately at times it is necessary to reschedule elective surgeries. It would not be feasible to open a surgical hub onsite in Killarney given the clinical need to be in the proximity of Tralee. Ms O'Sullivan advised that she would take all these issues raised back to hospital management.

(m) Cllr. Dominic Finn put forward the following question:

"While I welcome and sincerely thank you for all the services being provided in the Cobh Primary Care Centre, can I ask for the provision of an Antenatal Clinic (outreach clinic from CUMH) to be considered and provided in the centre due to the growing population in Cobh, and also to make it much easier for patients to access, rather than having to travel out of town."

A written response from Mr Adrian Bradley, General Manager, Cork University Maternity Hospital was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Finn thanked Management for the response and appreciated that the HSE are continually reviewing the needs and reviewing the situation. Ms Bridie O'Sullivan advised that currently we have eight (8) outreach clinics funded in Cork. Should additional funding be made available they certainly could consider new facilities in other locations including Cobh.

6. Questions

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

"To ask if the HSE plan to have a treatment centre for addicts in County Carlow and if not how can other groups go about setting up one."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Dr Howley provided an outline of services provision in Kilkenny and Carlow, noting that services provision ranges from preventative services, to individual and family support services, and treatment services. She advised Cllr Browne to forward any specific individual concerns to her and she would arrange to follow up as appropriate.

(b) Cllr. John Coonan put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE provide an update on its policies and procedures regarding the repurchasing and reuse of hospital aids & appliances within our services?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Coonan complimented the service provided and emphasised the need to re-model and re-use equipment to ensure value for money. There is a responsibility on everyone in receipt of appliances to take care of them and return them when no longer required. Dr Howley agreed with Cllr Coonan and confirmed that where possible and clinically appropriate the HSE is recycling equipment in line with standards - this represents value for money and as the Councillor mentioned is more environmentally sustainable.

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

"What is the current status of the rollout of Integrated Healthcare Areas (IHAs), and when is it expected that they will be fully finalised and implemented?"

A written response from Dr Andy Philips, Regional Executive Officer, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Sheehy acknowledged the response and that the integration process was moving at pace. He requested to have the REO be in attendance at a future meeting to hear the issues raised by Forum members.

(d) Cllr. Declan Barry put forward the following question:

"When will weekend emergency cardiac care services, i.e. (Saturday/Sunday, 8am-8pm) commence at UHW?"

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

Cllr Barry acknowledged the written reply and welcomed the provisional date to commence these 8am to 8pm services by 18th March 2025. A number of RHF South

East members supported this Question and all stated the need for 24/7 cover for the South East.

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

"To ask the HSE what would be the process to transfer the employment of all Section 39/38 therapists in the South/South West area to become employees of the HSE, and if there has ever been a cost compiler or associated with such a process."

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

Cllr Horgan acknowledged the written response and explained how transferring Section 39 Therapists to HSE employment may help to solve recruitment problems and asked whether this would be possible. Ms O'Donovan in response advised that there are a large number (110) of Section 39 organisations with service level agreements in place throughout Cork and Kerry area. These service level arrangements have statutory components.

(f) Cllr. Margaret McDonnell put forward the following question:

"To ask for the plans and timeline in relation to Glanmire Primary Care Centre?"

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Assistant National Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr McDonnell noted that the planning application was not approved recently which was disappointing and asked what was next for the project. Ms O'Donovan advised that at this time there was no specific update on this but would keep the members apprised as future plans are decided on.

(g) Cllr. John O'Leary put forward the following question:

"When is the new ophthalmologist going to be appointed in Clonmel?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr O'Leary highlighted that there is currently no ophthalmologist in Clonmel which is not satisfactory with the nearest service would be UHW. He noted that the HSE is working to progress recruitment and requested an estimated timeline to achieve this. In response Dr Howley advised she could not provide a definite timeline for the appointment. She acknowledged and regretted the impact on patients. She advised that the HSE are currently looking at interim options whilst the recruitment process is ongoing and that an update once available would be provided to members.

(h) Cllr. Marie Murphy put forward the following question:

"When did the clinical pathways regarding ADHD treatment change in the South Tipperary area and what plans, if any, are in place to provide an ADHD clinic in the South Tipperary catchment area? Are there any financial supports in place to help people pay for private assessments?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Health Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Murphy thanked Management for the written response and welcomed the recent approval under the clinical programme for the development of an Adult ADHD team for the South East. Dr Howley agreed this is very positive to have secured this funding approval and recruitment will be prioritised to commence as soon as possible.

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

"Can we please have an update on exactly where we are with the recruitment of the clinical nurse specialist/ crisis intervention nurse for the Iveragh area?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Chief Officer, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare was circulated to members and noted. This question was taken with Motion 4(k) above.

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

"How many Consultants are on duty in University Hospital Kerry on the weekend?"

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

7. Date and Time of next meeting – 27th March 2025 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork.

MINUTES **MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 27th March 2025 at 11am
Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern **Chairperson**

Cllr Ann Bambury
Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Liam Brazil
Cllr Tomas Breathnach*
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr Danny Collins*
Cllr John Coonan
Cllr Caroline Cronin*
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 Mary Lenihan Foley
Cllr Marie Moloney
Cllr Norma Moriarty*
Cllr Marie Murphy*
Cllr Tony O'Shea*
Cllr John O'Leary
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Daniel Pender
Cllr John Sheehan
Cllr Mikey Sheehy
Cllr Michael Smith
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

*** attended online**

Apologies:

Cllr Fiona Kerins
Cllr Margaret McDonnell

In Attendance:

Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Kerry, HSE South West*
Ms Mari O'Donovan, Head of Primary Care, HSE South West
Ms Michelle Doyle, Head of Service, Disability Services, HSE Dublin and South East
Mr Jonathon Hoare, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, HSE South West
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

*** attended online**

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 27th February 2025

On the proposal of Cllr Dominic Finn seconded by Cllr Ger Frisby the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 27th February 2025 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

The members adopted the Annual Report 2024.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (a)** South East Committee Meeting held on 8th April 2025 in Kilkenny
- (b)** South West Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2025 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

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

"To seek the breakdown of Resource Allocation Group applications for all CHOs and LHOs covering the HSE South West along with payments made for 2024 and 2025 year to date and the amount of applications outstanding or awaiting payment, in tabular form."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan asked whether applications for children and adults were submitted to the RAG for approval. Mari O'Donovan advised that submissions were received for paediatrics and adults and that there are no waiting lists for standard aids and appliances in HSE South and West at present.

(b) Cllr Daniel Pender moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"For the HSE to provide an update on the number of staff vacancies in CDNT in Carlow/Kilkenny and the same figure for the previous year."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Pender acknowledged the reply and asked for information on measures in place to support staff recruitment and retention to the CDNT. Michelle Doyle outlined that this remains a focus for the HSE with some improvement over the last year. Disability Services continue to recruit therapy posts having

received approval. Cllr Browne asked whether the implementation of Progressing Disability Services in September 2021 and the assignment of children with complex needs to Disability Services or non-complex needs to Primary Care has impacted on the overall service. Michelle Doyle advised that there is ongoing collaboration across Primary Care and Disability Services in relation to children with non-complex and complex needs to ensure they are on the correct care pathway. The staffing in Primary Care is equally challenging with shortages in certain therapy grades across the service, or staff leaving due to promotional opportunities.

(c) Cllr John Fleming moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To Request an update on the proposed primary care centre for New Ross Co Wexford."

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Fleming acknowledged the written reply. He outlined the need for a new Primary Care Centre in New Ross and asked for this to be progressed without delay. Cllr Fleming also asked about the PIN and e-tender procurement process and whether there are more specific timeframes available from HSE Estates. Michelle Doyle advised that she would ask HSE Estates to provide clarification on process and any further details as available.

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

"For the month of January 2025, can figures please be provided for how many people were waiting in trolleys in University Hospital Kerry. Please give a 7-day average across the month from Monday through to Sunday."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

(e) Cllr Joe Sullivan moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"What is the timeline for the delivery of the long-awaited Primary Care Centre for Gorey County Wexford. When can it reasonably be expected to be operational."

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sullivan noted that the delivery of the long-awaited Gorey Primary Care is critical for the area. He outlined developments in nearby areas such as Enniscorthy, Carnew and Arklow over the last ten years and yet Gorey Primary Care remains outstanding. Cllr Sullivan urged HSE Managers and Capital and Estates to prioritise this Primary Care Centre development given the health needs of the local population.

Michelle Doyle Head of Disability Services acknowledged the concerns raised by Cllr Sullivan and advised that she would raise these issues with HSE Capital and Estates.

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

"That the HSE would seriously consider availing of the vacant premises as an Ambulance base for the Cobh area using the new vacant unit that is attached to the Primary Care Centre in Cobh."

A written response from Mr Rob Moriarty, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Finn noted the written response. Mari O'Donovan Head of Primary Care advised that the NAS will commit to assessing the premises in Cobh to determine its suitability having regard for location, accessibility, and operational feasibility. However, it is not possible to have ambulance bases/services in every location. Ms O'Donovan confirmed that the HSE considers all vacant buildings and how best to use them. She agreed to take this request back to relevant Management for review.

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

"To ask for detailed update on plans for Kelvin Grove site Carlow town."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Browne acknowledged the written reply. He stated that this site was previously owned by Carlow County Council. He was satisfied with confirmation that that Holy Angels would now progress on Kelvin Grove site and the Children's Disability Network Team would be developed on the St Dymphna's campus. Cllr Browne asked that these developments would proceed and that an update on timeframes would be provided by HSE Capital and Estates. Michelle Doyle thanked Cllr Browne for raising this matter and as Head of Disability Services she is keen to progress in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders from a service perspective.

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

"That this Forum calls on the Minister for Health and the Government to introduce legislation to ban the use of vaping products (e-cigarettes) in indoor public spaces, workplaces, and other designated areas, similar to the existing smoking ban."

A discussion was held in the Chambers, it was decided to write to the Minister for Health

(i) Cllr Finbarr Harrington moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the HSE would send a list of all the available services at Bantry General Hospital to all the GPs and South Doc in the catchment area of BGH, i.e. West Cork and South Kerry."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Harrington thanked management for their comprehensive reply and noted the range of services provided at Bantry General Hospital. He stated that it is important for all

GPs in the area to be aware of services available at the hospital and particularly Locum GPs who may not be familiar with these. Mari O'Donovan agreed it is important to ensure GPs are informed of various services available at Bantry General Hospital including the Acute Medical Assessment Unit and the Local Injury Unit. In addition Ms O'Donovan also advised that an Endocrinologist and Cardiologist post were recently advertised for the hospital.

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

"That we work with the parents and friends of St Francis Special school past and present in locating a mid-Kerry based adult respite centre with a view to providing for the continuing needs of the students who have very few if any options when they become adults."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty noted this written response and advised members of a recent meeting between parents/families in St Francis Special School, and local Kerry councillors. The powerful testimonies from parents at this meeting emphasised their needs for improved respite / other support services for their children when they become adults. Respite services are much needed by families. Cllr Moriarty urged the HSE to do more to ensure better service provision given the increased demand for respite services.

Ms Julie O'Neill IHA Manager advised that she is familiar with these important issues having worked in the school. She acknowledged the importance of respite provision for children and adults and the HSE has invested significantly in respite care in recent years. The HSE is engaged with St Francis Special School and supportive of their proposal for transitional respite provision, however, this is funding dependent. Other Forum Members supported Cllr Moriarty's motion highlighting the needs for families to be able to have planned respite. Cllr Moriarty thanked Members for their collegiality and advised HSE Management that they would continue to advocate for this service.

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

"That the HSE Regional Health Forum South represents and supports the upfront addressing of the continued staff shortages/vacancies with particular reference to mental health services that are having an extremely serious and detrimental effect on the service."

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, and from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Coonan acknowledged the written reply and welcomed the National Service Plan 2025 developments. However, he outlined the staffing deficits in Mental Health Services across the country and particularly in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services where there are vacancies in specialist roles. Access to services is impacted and this is difficult for service users and their families. Cllr Coonan stated that current staff are under significant pressures and that unfortunately Mental Health Services are sometimes referred to as the 'Cinderella service' of the HSE and that RHF member should advocate to the Department of Health for additional funding and for Mental Health services to be resourced

appropriately. A number of other Members strongly supported Cllr Coonan's Motion. Cllr Coonan also questioned delays in the HSE recruitment process.

Michelle Doyle thanked Cllr Coonan for raising this important issue and outlined that the appointment of a CAMHS Clinical Director to the area will assist with service improvement. In addition, children may need service inputs from across CAMHS, Primary Care and Disability Services and under the new IHA Structures the focus will be on developing integrated children's services.

Julie O'Neill IHA Manager outlined challenges in CAMHS recruitment and that vacancies across MHS are a concern. Mari O'Donovan advised that other services are also experiencing staffing deficits. The HSE is working to address vacancies, approve posts and progress recruitment. There are shortages nationally and internationally of particular specialties including CAMHS Consultant Psychiatrists and other MHS nursing and therapy professionals.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr Fergal Browne put forward the following question:

"Can I ask for update regarding timeline for when minor injuries unit will be opened in Carlow town?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Browne acknowledged the reply and outlined the urgent need in the Carlow area for this necessary development. He asked for specific details on timelines. Michelle Doyle agreed that she would ask HSE Capital and Estates for an update to be provided once they are available.

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

"To ask for a breakdown of all those awaiting audiology assessment and treatment in CHO4 by LHO area from 0 to 65 plus and the length of time that they are awaiting intervention, by age, in tabular form and the measures being considered locally and nationally to clear such a waiting list."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan noted the reply and had a number of queries for HSE Management in relation to data and whole-time equivalents.

Mari O'Donovan Head of Primary Care in response advised that Audiology is a regional service and that the centralised waiting list for Health Region Southwest Audiology maintains is returned functionally as South Lee. She stated that outreach is being scoped in North Cork Primary Care Centre which has suitable clinical rooms available. Ms O'Donovan stated that they are seeking an additional Audiologist in

Kerry. HSE South West Audiology Service has undertaken waiting list actions to improve access to services and would also consider all suitably qualified applicants.

(c) Cllr Pat Dunphy put forward the following question:

"What is the waiting time for Orthopaedic operations and procedures in UHW, and what is the waiting time for operations in Kilcreene Hospital, Kilkenny."

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Dunphy asked for further update on actions to improve waiting times given that there are a substantial number of people on the waiting list for Kilcreene Orthopaedic Unit in particular.

(d) Cllr Daniel Pender put forward the following question:

"To ask the HSE what measures they are applying to improve retention of care staff for home help."

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, and from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Pender thanked Management for the response. He outlined that his constituents are concerned about getting their approved services given the ongoing staffing challenges and particularly in rural areas. Cllr Pender highlighted concerns about the number of different home support workers going into the home which can be difficult for service users and their families. Michelle Doyle outlined that the HSE as well as private providers are experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties. She agreed with Members that continuity of service provision is important for those in receipt of services, and whilst the HSE makes every effort to ensure stability and continuity at times it may be necessary to have a number of providers involved in the delivery of a package of care. The HSE endeavours to provide flexible working rosters and other measures for staff.

(e) Cllr John Sheehan put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE clarify if the HSE Building; (Father O Leary Hall) on Shandon Street Cork is sold? Can the HSE Confirm if it was offered to the Land Development Agency and Cork City Council for sale. If there is no interest from these parties is it the HSE's intention to place it on the open market?"

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehan thanked Management for their detailed reply. He requested a more detailed timeline for the disposal of the property (which is a historical building) on the open market. The building is currently used by local youth clubs. Mari O'Donovan advised that she would revert to Daniel Clifford HSE Capital and Estates on this matter and advise of the context of this query and arrange to revert to Cllr Sheehan.

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

"Given Killarney has been chosen for a Minor Injuries Unit and this is welcome, what plans, if any are in place for a similar unit to be placed in the North of the county in Tralee or Listowel to further relieve pressure on UHK?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted.

(g) Cllr Liam Brazil put forward the following question:

"To ask what is the HSE intention for the old Health Centre Building in Knockmahon, Bunmahon, Co Waterford it hasn't been in use since around 2012?"

A written response from Ms Sinéad Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Brazil acknowledged the written reply, however, he raised concerns in relation to the building which has been empty for some time and queried the length of time it is taking for the HSE to decide on whether or not to dispose of the property. Cllr Brazil indicated that the same stands for Stradbally Health Centre.

Cllr O'Leary supported Cllr Brazil and requested an update on Kilmeaden Health Centre.

Michelle Doyle stated that she would take Cllr Brazil's concerns back to HSE Estates and request further details from then and also seek an update on Kilmeaden.

(h) Cllr Joe Sullivan put forward the following question:

"What is the up-to-date situation in relation to the closed Health Centre at Camolin County Wexford. In formulating your answer, I would ask you to bear in mind I asked this question first at Health Forum level some 11 years ago."

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

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

"Given the increasing demand for rehabilitation and dementia-specific beds in Kerry, which is contributing to delays in patient discharge from University Hospital Kerry (UHK), what plans are in place to address this issue? Are there any commitments for additional bed capacity or dedicated facilities to support patients requiring specialised care?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehy welcomed the reference to additional capacity and queried whether the 13 and 15 beds mentioned in the response were separate entities and the timeline. He stated that all patients

and particularly those with dementia need to be in appropriate spaces and not on hospital trolleys.

Julie O'Neill confirmed that the additional capacity will be dementia specific and short-term beds in the CNU Killarney. Cllr Moloney asked why patients were not being moved over into the new building. Julie O'Neill in response advised that the new Community Nursing Unit (CNU) is a Public Private Partnership (PPP) development - the original timeframe received has been delayed with no new date as of yet. This is not related to staffing of a new CNU. PPPs are managed at a national level and with regulatory requirements by HIQA, these need to be completed prior to handover of the building. Once patients move into the new CNU it will be possible to then consider the old CNU location for other services / purposes. Julie O'Neill advised she would keep members updated.

(j) Cllr Finbarr Harrington put forward the following question:

"Can we please get an update on exactly what current School Dental service is available in West Cork and where exactly are we with recruitment of School Dentists in the West Cork area."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Harrington outlined difficulties accessing dental services locally and people having to travel for appointments. In response Mari O'Donovan advised of the current recruitment process to a vacant dental surgeon post in West Cork whilst acknowledging challenges with the availability of dental staff and shortages of dentists nationally and internationally. She outlined that the Orthodontic Service is a regional service at St Finbarr's Unit Cork city.

Cllr Lenihan Foley supported this question and outlined delays in school dental screening in the East Cork area. Mari O'Donovan in reply advised that school dental programme was impacted by the covid pandemic, however work is ongoing with target classes. She also outlined oral health initiatives such as 'Lift the Lip' in Cork city. As part of targeting of resources, each dental service maintains a commitment to urgent/emergency treatment for the relief of pain, infection, and the sequelae of trauma. Where service deficits are identified, resources where available can be redirected to address those needs.

(k) Cllr Dominic Finn put forward the following question:

"What is the current waiting time for a child to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) once a GP referral is done for the child?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Finn acknowledged the detailed reply. He indicated that this question related to an individual case and would therefore submit details directly.

Julie O'Neill IHA Manager advised of a planned CAMHS Hub for all of the Region for brief intensive interventions and access to relevant Consultant/Nursing services based on clinical risk of those presenting. A premises has been identified for this and

recruitment for the Consultant post is proceeding. As with other disciplines and specialties there are difficulties in the recruitment of CAMHS Consultants and also Psychologists.

Ms O'Neill stated that diagnostic assessment and interventions for children and adolescents with autism is generally within the remit of HSE Primary Care and Children's Disability Network Teams. When deciding if a child or adolescent needs to attend CAMHS, a number of factors are considered by the CAMHS Team who decide if the child or adolescent reaches the threshold for community CAMHS i.e. whether their mental health disorder is moderate to severe. For children and adolescents with complex needs/disability who may also present with a moderate to severe mental health disorder at the same time, this may involve joint working or shared care between services and other agencies supporting children and adolescents.

Ms O'Neill reflected the need to move beyond individual service silos and in line with Sláintecare progress fully integrated children's services.

Mari O'Donovan reiterated the difficulties in the recruitment of psychologists - posts are approved but the HSE is unable to fill. The HSE is looking to colleges and recruitment from abroad. The training of clinical psychologists is a lengthy process. Ms O'Donovan advised Members that the Region has advertised a Regional Director of Psychology post as part future planning. Telehealth whilst not ideal is one interim option. In addition, there are various community and voluntary organisations who provide very good supports to children and their families.

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

"Are there staff vacancies impacting the service provided to Fertha Day Centre Cahersiveen and if so when will those vacancies be filled and how will service delivery be impacted in the interim."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty acknowledged this reply noting that the matter had been addressed.

6. Date and Time of next meeting - Thursday, 1st May 2025 at 11am in Council Chamber, Cork County Council, County Hall, Co Cork.

MINUTES **MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 1st May 2025 at 11am

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

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern **Chairperson**

Cllr Ann Bambury
Cllr Declan Barry
Cllr Liam Brazil *
Cllr Tomas Breathnach
Cllr Fergal Browne*
Cllr Danny Collins
Cllr Pat Dunphy
Cllr Deirdre Ferris*
Cllr Dominic Finn
Cllr John Fleming
Cllr Ger Frisby
Cllr Finbarr Harrington
Cllr Jackie Healy Rae *
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 Tony O'Shea *
Cllr Daniel Pender *
Cllr John Sheehan
Cllr Mikey Sheehy *
Cllr Michael Smith
Cllr Frank Staples
Cllr Joe Sullivan
Cllr Adrienne Wallace*
Cllr Adam Wyse

*** attended online**

Apologies:

Cllr John Coonan
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Marie Moloney

In Attendance:

Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Cork South and West
Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny South
Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East*
Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE
Dublin and South East*
Mr Jonthan Hoare, Director of Communication and Public Affairs, HSE South West
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

*** attended online**

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

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday, 27th of March 2025

On the proposal of Cllr Finbarr Harrington seconded by Cllr Mary Lenihan Foley the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 27th March 2025 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr Ahern informed the members that she received correspondence from Minister Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, Minister for Health, dated 30th April 2025. This correspondence was in response to a letter written by Cllr Ahern to the Minister arising from Motion 4(h) tabled by Cllr Mikey Sheehy. This motion looked for the introduction of legislation to ban the use of vaping products (e-cigarettes) in indoor public spaces, workplaces, and other designated areas. Cllr Sheehy stated that he was very disappointed with the response from the Minister and requested that the Regional Health Forum Chairperson and members write back to the Minister and request action. Cllr Ahern shared in Cllr Sheehy's disappointment and agreed that a further letter should be written to the Minister. This was strongly supported by the members in the Chambers with Cllr Sheehan stating that Ireland has been a world leader in terms of action on Tobacco and Tobacco use and a similar approach is needed on vaping as more and more evidence comes out on the harmful effects of vaping. A number of other members spoke to support the motion.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (c) South East Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2025 in Kilkenny
- (d) South West Committee Meeting held on 9th October 2025 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

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

"That the HSE provide an update on the Primary Care Centre for Youghal and a timeline on same."

A written response from Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Lenihan Foley stated that she was happy with the response and requested that she is updated on the progress on this project as it progresses.

(b) Cllr Ann Bambury moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"How many community hospital beds are available in Cork County for long-term stay patients? How many people are currently awaiting the fair deal scheme in Cork County? And how many people are availing of the fair deal scheme in Cork County?"

Lastly, what is the bed capacity across Cork County between both private nursing homes and HSE community hospitals for long-term care?"

A written response from Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Bambury thanked HSE Management for the response. Although Bandon Community Hospital is a fantastic new build serving the Bandon community she requested that the HSE look again at the number of beds in the hospital with the increasing need for these beds in the area. Ms Priscilla Lynch informed members that there is notable increases in the aging population in Cork and Kerry. The HSE have carried out predicative analysis from now to 2030 on services required by older persons and providing those services as close to home as possible. The Public Health Department, HSE South West providing statistics to assist in the plan to provide bed types required into the future.

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

"That this Forum urges the HSE and hospitals within the Cork area to frontload efforts to hire radiation therapists especially in order to open the closed linear accelerator and CT Scanner in Cork University Hospital."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan thanked Ms Lynch for the comprehensive response and noted the deficit of WTEs in the area. In terms of the external recruitment agency Cllr Horgan asked what the costs and success rates were associated with this recruitment agency. Ms Lynch said she would come back to Cllr Horgan with those details and stated that the system involved a finder's fee with payments made as successful candidates are recruited.

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

"Could the HSE address the issue where GP Practices have no referral pathway available for GP's to access Radiological Investigations for children patients who have Medical / GP Visit Cards."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Finn thanked HSE Management for the response and requested a timeline involved and Ms Lynch explained that work is currently underway but information on this is not available yet.

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

"I am requesting that the HSE would employ a full time clinical specialist podiatrist in West Cork as part of a preventative strategy in chronic disease management so this would be in line with the N.I.C.E. Guidelines and the International working group of the Diabetic Foot and The National wound care strategy programme in the UK."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Collins

noted that a Podiatrist comes once a week to West Cork but more is required as a preventative strategy for the area. Ms Lynch explained that a previous recruitment drive proved unsuccessful in securing a person in this role. Approval has been granted to re advertise this post, and a campaign is anticipated to occur soon. Cllr Collins asked for a time line on this campaign, Ms Lynch said she would come back to him with this.

(f) Cllr Deirdre Ferris moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"That this Forum requests an update on the publication of the North Kerry CAMHS Review."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Ferris stated that she felt that the children and families have been let down as they wait for this review to be completed. Ms Lynch agreed that it was very disappointing that the children and families continue to wait for the publication of this review. Initially, it was hoped that the review would be completed quickly. However, Dr. Colette Halpin and her team of consultants realised that a thorough and robust review would take longer. The priority was to ensure that every young person's file received a consistent and detailed review. Cllr Ferris requested a date for this publication and Ms Lynch said she link in with the External Review Team and relay Cllr Ferris's concerns as well as Forum members concerns and revert when a definitive time of publication is available.

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

"That the HSE investigate the feasibility of providing nursing, Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), or physiotherapy support—potentially in partnership with MTU Tralee—on-site at the hydrotherapy pool located on the university campus. This facility, which is already equipped with hoist access, presents a valuable opportunity to expand its use in supporting individuals with mobility challenges, whether in rehabilitation or as part of ongoing mobility-focused programmes"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Sheehy welcomed the initiatives in place but encouraged the HSE to make further use of the facility and that it could stretch wider and be used further for the rehabilitation of those with mobility challenges. Ms Lynch explained that a targeted initiative will be commencing at the end of May 2025. The Community Healthcare Network 2 (CHN2) Physiotherapist will facilitate a pool-based rehabilitation programme at MTU specifically for suitable musculoskeletal (MSK) clients who are currently on the Outpatient Department (OPD) waiting list.

This programme will be delivered in a small group format and will focus on engaging patients in aquatic exercise and improving balance. The primary objective is to build participants' confidence in using the pool environment for rehabilitation and to support them in managing ongoing or chronic MSK conditions independently over time.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr Ann Bambury put forward the following question:

"How many home care hours are being contracted to private home care companies by the HSE, and how many are provided by HSE-contracted HCSAs? Also, how many older people currently qualify for home care assistance?"

A written response from Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Bambury welcomed the detailed response and stated that she had an interest in Older People Services and the recruitment side of HCSAs. She thought having a 3 over 5 working schedule as well as 5 over 7 would be a big incentive to recruit HCSAs as this allowed for a greater time for family alongside work. Male carers are becoming very popular and which is very much needed. Ms Lynch stated that self-scheduling is being introduced which would allow more flexibility. Initiatives underway in the HSE South West region to counter capacity issues in the home support sector include the appointment of two dedicated recruitment coordinators for Health Care Assistants (Home Support) with campaigns running throughout the year. The most recent recruitment campaign for HCSAs was undertaken earlier this year which, following screening and interview, has identified 86 potential candidates for Cork and Kerry positions pending completion of recruitment checks.

(b) Cllr Roger Kennedy put forward the following question:

"What is the current wait time for a first-time chemotherapy appointment, from time of decision/consent to treat in all hospitals in the HSE Dublin and South East health region? What are the plans to reduce wait times in each of the relevant hospitals?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Kennedy thanked HSE Management for the very detailed response. Ms Reynolds updated members on the KPIs of the hospitals involved in HSE Dublin and South East.

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

"Following on from the publication of the HSE capital plan, which is welcome, I seek in tabular form the number of staff by grade required to fulfil the operations in totality of each new project in the Cork area."

And

(d) Cllr John Pratt put forward the following question:

"Following on from the publication of the HSE capital plan, which is welcome, I seek in tabular form the number of staff by grade required to fulfil the operations in totality of each new project in the Waterford area."

These two questions were responded to together with a written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Director of Estates, HSE South West and Ms Dorota Nieznanska,

Director of Estates, HSE South East circulated to members and noted. Cllr Horgan stated that he was a little disappointed in the response he thought that general WTE requirements should be made available when a project is put forward for the capital planning to ensure these facilities are staffed efficiently. Ms Lynch stated that this information is included in each capital plan submission but there are caveats involved including length of time for projects as well as others. Ms Roseanne Killeen stated that there were 250 new staff as a result of Capital projects and it is very important to have staffing in place to open new builds. Figures are included at the initial stages of a planning submission and can change over the duration of a project so this needs reviews and changes throughout the life time of a project from start to finish.

(e) Cllr Danny Collins put forward the following question:

"Are the HSE looking at opening extra respite beds in Older Persons Services in the West Cork area as at the moment there is a massive need for them."

A written response from Ms Priscilla Lynch, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork South and West, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Collins stated that the need for these dedicated respite beds was clear in the area. He said Nursing Homes are not inclined to provide respite beds when they can fill them long term. Ms Lynch said, as she had to Cllr Bambury, that work was being carried out with the Department of Public Health to determine the requirement for Older People into the future and this included the need for respite beds and this would determine how much more capacity would be required for the region.

(f) Cllr Deirdre Ferris put forward the following question:

"Have the HSE had any requests for a meeting with representatives of the families of St Francis' School since our last meeting and if so, can the members be informed of any updates or plans?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Ferris acknowledged the response and stated that she felt that this did not reflect a previous discussion at a Committee meeting held the previous month. Ms Lynch's understanding of the situation is that discussions had taken place on this but Ms Lynch said that she would ask the Head of Disabilities to liaise with Cllr Ferris as follow up on this to clarify the situation.

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

"I am seeking clarification regarding the recent announcement about the introduction of 24/7 cardiac care services in University Hospital Waterford. Could you confirm if this announcement is accurate, and if so, provide details on the expected timeline for when the service will be fully operational?"

A written response from Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Dunphy acknowledged the response and requested that the Regional Health Forum members be kept up-to-date with the progress of 24/7 Cardiac care

services. Ms Reynolds assured Cllr Dunphy that she would endeavour to keep RHF members up-to-date on this matter which is so important to all of the South East members.

6. Date and Time of next meeting – 5th of June 2025 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

MINUTES **MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH**

Thursday, 5th June 2025 at 11am
Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork

Present:

Cllr Ann Marie Ahern* **Chairperson**

Cllr Ann Bambury

Cllr Declan Barry

Cllr Tomas Breathnach

Cllr Fergal Browne

Cllr Danny Collins

Cllr John Coonan*

Cllr Pat Dunphy

Cllr Deirdre Ferris*

Cllr Dominic Finn

Cllr John Fleming

Cllr Ger Frisby

Cllr Damian Geoghegan

Cllr Finbarr Harrington **Vice Chairperson**

Cllr Jackie Healy-Rae

Cllr Peter Horgan*

Cllr Roger Kennedy

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 Michael Smith

Cllr Joe Sullivan

Cllr Adrienne Wallace*

Cllr Adam Wyse

*** attended online**

Apologies:

In Attendance:

- Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Cork North and East, HSE South West
- Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East*
- Mr Jonathan Hoare, Director of Communication and Parliamentary Affairs, HSE South West
- Ms Emma Finn, Director of Communication and Parliamentary Affairs, HSE Dublin and South East*
- Members of the Regional Health Forum South Office staff

*** attended online**

Cllr Ahern, Chairperson attended online and Cllr Finbarr Harrington who attended in person Chaired the meeting. Cllr Harrington opened the meeting and welcomed members and HSE Management. He advised that this is to be the last meeting of the Regional Health Forum South in its current structure and that the next meeting would be in the new structure as part of the Health Regions and that this will involve a split of the current Forum. He thanked all members and HSE officers for their support and hard work stating that it had been a very valuable Forum as it stood.

The Chairperson proposed a Vote of Sympathy for Cllr Declan Barry on the sad passing of his sister Josephine Barry Carroll on the 15th May 2025. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 1st May 2025

On the proposal of Cllr Dominic Finn seconded by Cllr Roger Kennedy the minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, 1st May 2025 were approved and adopted by the members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

2.1 Election of Chairperson

2.2 Election of Vice Chairperson

It was agreed by the Chairperson and the members that the election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson would be postponed until the next meeting and first meeting of the Regional Health Forums within the new reconfiguration.

3. Committees

The next Committee meetings will be held on:

- (e)** South East Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2025 in Kilkenny
- (f)** South West Committee Meeting held on 9th October 2025 in Tralee

4. Notices of Motion

Cllr Ferris's Motion and question were taken first on her request.

(i) Cllr Deirdre Ferris moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"Can the members be supplied with the details of planned upgrades and repairs in the Cashel Ward servicing paediatrics in UHK?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Ferris acknowledged the response and relayed her concerns over the condition of the Cashel Ward and looked for a definitive timeline for the repairs. Ms Sony Cotter,

IHA Manager Cork North and East stated that she would confirm the dates of the two stages involved in the project.

Question (f) Cllr Deirdre Ferris put forward the following question:

"Can I get a list of all vacant HSE owned properties in Kerry please?"

A written response from Mr Daniel Clifford, Director of Estates, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Ferris thanked HSE Management for the response she thought the list was a substantial list and was very interested in their locations and especially those in prime locations.

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

"What options, if any, are available to Day Care Centres in South Tipperary and throughout the South East region to apply for funding for a replacement bus to enable the smooth operation of transporting users safely to and from day care centres?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Murphy thanked the HSE for the response she explained that currently there is a fundraiser for a vehicle ongoing. She hoped that there would be more HSE funding available in the near future.

(b) Cllr Adrienne Wallace moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"That the HSE reconsider the €220 fee for the Chicken Pox Vaccine for children born before October 1st 2024 with special consideration given to a free vaccine for children with disabilities and/or underlying health conditions whose families already face additional costs."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Wallace thanked HSE Management for the response. She said that families with children with serious underlying health conditions can be under pressure paying considerable fee for the vaccines. Ms Sinead Reynolds said that she would bring this particular concern back to the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) and that she would revert to Cllr Wallace and RHF Members on receipt of their response.

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

"Do the HSE have any plans for a one stop addiction therapy hub, in Waterford City and County? Indeed, what addiction services are there currently available, in Waterford? Namely, for people suffering from either drugs, alcohol or gambling addictions, or indeed, a combination of any or all of these."

A written response from Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Barry stated he was happy and thanked Ms Sinead Reynolds with the very comprehensive response. He stated that he would welcome any development to have a Tier 4 residential service located in Waterford.

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

"To outline the capital funding allocations for health facilities in County Carlow as recently announced by the HSE."

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Browne was anxious to confirm the plans for the Local Injury Unit and Kelvin Grove were progressing. He also took the opportunity to thank the HSE for their support and response to a recent serious incident that occurred in Carlow with the provision of counselling services. Ms Reynolds was glad that the HSE were able to provide assistance to the people of Carlow effected by this incident and will continue to do so as necessary. Cllr Wallace was grateful for the rapid response and stated that whilst the initial shock may be wearing off there would be in need for supports to be available into the coming weeks. Ms Reynolds stated that she will continue to monitor this and had staff that were skilled with dealing with these serious incidents.

(e) Cllr Ann Bambury moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Can I request the following information be provided: the number of children living in Cork County currently awaiting a referral to a children's disability network team? Also, please provide an up-to-date breakdown of the number of children currently awaiting various therapies, e.g., speech & language, phycologist, play therapy, and the average length of time they await these vital therapies through the CDNT services."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Bambury requested that recruitment around CDNT teams needed to be treated with more urgency as children can regress with lack of therapies due to lack of staff. Ms Sonya Cotter explained that ongoing recruitment campaigns are ongoing in the HSE Southwest and recruitment is priority.

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

"I am calling on the H.S.E. to increase services for children with special needs such as speech and language, physiotherapy, psychology, psychiatrists and Occupational Therapists."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Collins made the point from himself and his constituents that early intervention is better for a child's

progress and costs are far less at this stage rather than future crises. He highlighted that there was no special school in West Cork which is a large geographic area within Cork. Cllr Marie Moloney agreed that early intervention is required. Cllr Dominic Finn supported this and asked about the CAMHS hub in Mahon. Ms Cotter explained that currently there are six special schools in Cork have been included in a national pilot programme to provide occupational therapy, speech & language therapy and behaviour supports on-site in special schools. Ms Cotter said she would get back with an update on the CAMHS Hub query on Mahon.

(g) Cllr John Fleming moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"I am calling on the Hse to reduce the long waiting times and lists for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) sufferers"

A written response from Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted.

Cllr Fleming spoke at Spinal Cord Stimulation and the waiting lists involved with this. He also stated that the NTPF scheme was used in the past to access this service but he understood this to be is no longer available. Ms Reynolds said she seek clarification on Spinal Cord Stimulation and waiting lists and treatment abroad NTPF scheme and come back to him.

(h) Cllr Daniel Pender moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That the HSE investigate the Western Australian Autism Association's approach to wrap around autism supports for Children and how they could be integrated into the Irish system."

A written response from Mr John Firtzmaurice, Chairperson of Service Improvement Programme Board Health Services Executive, I was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Pender thanked the HSE Management for the comprehensive response. He was pleased that this had been researched thoroughly by the HSE. He acknowledged that limitations exist in the best systems in the world and that they too have long waiting lists. Cllr Pender had a query on the interaction on CDNTs, families and schools. It was agreed to seek clarification on this.

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

"That the GAA field at Derrynane GAA in Caherdaniel be added as a landing spot for air ambulance and coast guard air-activity."

A written response from Mr Rob Moriarty, General Manager, Cork and Kerry, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty thanked and appreciated the positive response. She was confident that the criteria and standards would be met as required.

(k) Cllr Marie Moloney moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That following the transfer of patients from Killarney Community Hospital to the new facility that the HSE would invest serious funding in refurbishing the Community Hospital to provide much needed respite services for the people of Kerry. Many people who are caring for their loved ones with a disability at home cannot access respite services due to severe shortage of such facilities in Kerry."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty explained that families are under severe pressure while caring for their family members and do not get a break due to the lack of short term respite services. She enquired about the location of the Minor Injury Unit in Killarney.

Ms Cotter agreed with the need for respite services and acknowledged that more beds will be required to meet increased demands for centre based respite care. Respite can be provided in a variety of settings. Cllr Norma Moriarty supported the motion that more respite facilities to support families in Kerry. Cllr McDonnell agreed with this within the Cork area families were finding it difficult to plan or get away for a break due to the lack of these respite beds. Cllr Bambury supported this and encouraged more engagement with healthcare providers in the community. Cllr Moloney also queried as to whether there was a National Database of Carers. Ms Cotter stated that she was unaware of a National database but locally Public Health Nurses had lists of carers in their areas. Cllr Jackie Healy Rae supported the motion and encouraged the utilisation of any beds that become available into the near future would be used for respite beds.

(I) Cllr Margaret McDonnell moved the following Motion, standing in her name:

"Could I have an update on the Primary Care Centre in Glanmire?"

A written response from Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr McDonnell stated that planning permission was not approved t. Currently there are three GP surgeries in the area and the local constituents are still looking for GP spaces with the growing population in the area and there are none available. The local area also required therapies like podiatry etc. that only a Primary Care Centre can provide. Ms Cotter stated that she is aware that both Glanmire and Mayfield are in need of Primary Care Centres and said that HSE Management are having ongoing meetings with the Council to progress these.

5. Questions

(a) Cllr Adrienne Wallace put forward the following question:

"Noting that there were 86 less public health nurses in 2024 than there were at the end of 2020 – a six per cent decrease - and that the 2018 Health Service Capacity Review found there would be a 46 per cent increase in demand for public health nurse appointments by 2031. Can the HSE reveal whether there is adequate Public Health Nurses serving the Carlow/Kilkenny area and, if necessary, what measures are being implemented to ensure full recruitment?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Wallace advised she had heard anecdotally about shortages of Public Health Nursing and Community Registered Nurses that are impacting on services. Ms Reynolds advised that where vacancies arise there are ongoing efforts to recruit.

(b) Cllr Ann Bambury put forward the following question:

"How many children in Cork County are awaiting a CAMHS referral? What is the average wait time? How many children are currently availing of support from CAMHS in Cork County?"

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Bambury felt that more tele medicine was required and one record for each child sharing information across Departments. She thought incentivised initiatives for students who are graduates to work with CAMHS may help address recruitment problems, maybe a student loan or apprenticeships as some solutions to the Waiting Lists. Ms Cotter stated that meetings with CAMHS teams were ongoing on the provision of supports and how the HSE can address waiting lists.

(c) Cllr Roger Kennedy put forward the following question:

"Have the HSE any plans to establish a specialised clinic in the South East to deal with patients suffering from Cataracts?"

A written response from Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Health Manager, Waterford/Wexford, and from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Kennedy stated that a 12 month wait for surgery is not good enough and enquired how many were on the waiting list. Ms Reynolds stated that there was funding was provided for the development of Eye Care Teams for parts of the country, however to date the South East has not been included. It is acknowledged that there should be similar services across the country, and we are committed to improving and providing a better service. Ms Reynolds said she would follow up on numbers waiting for the Councillor.

(d) Cllr John Fleming put forward the following question:

"Why is autism not classed as a medical condition in order for a GP to get involved."

A written response from Ms Sinead Reynolds, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Waterford/Wexford, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Fleming noted that Autism is generally understood as a neurodevelopmental difference, rather than a medical disorder. He said there are families spending large amounts of money seeking private assessments / services and long waiting lists in public healthcare. If this could be avoided by going through

GP services, it would help. Ms Reynolds specified that GPs have an important role and input as part of the healthcare team and Autism.

Ms Reynolds acknowledged the difficulties for families dealing with access issues.

(e) Cllr Daniel Pender put forward the following question:

"What supports is the HSE providing to those being diagnosed as neurodivergent later in life?"

A written response from Ms Roseanne Killeen, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager, Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary, HSE Dublin and South East was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Pender noted that there were not a lot of supports for people diagnosed with ADHD later in life. Ms Reynolds informed members that that in 2025 HSE Dublin and South East Region our Mental Health Services received national funding approval to develop an Adult ADHD Team to serve Integrated Healthcare Area Waterford Wexford and IHA Carlow Kilkenny and South Tipperary areas.

(g) Cllr Norma Moriarty put forward the following question:

"Can we get an update on progress in securing an ambulance base in Killorglin to help serve the Iveragh peninsula and alleviate the pressure on the Cahersiveen base?"

A written response from Mr Rob Moriarty, General Manager, Cork and Kerry, National Ambulance Service was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moriarty welcomed the response and acknowledged that a lot of work has taken place to get the project to this stage. She asked about the timeline as referenced in the written reply. Mr Moriarty said that there has been a multifaceted approach taken by the NAS and that it is hoped to secure the base and additional staff (subject to funding) within an overall delivery of services in the Kerry area. Mr Moriarty acknowledged the positive input of the IHA Manager on this.

(h) Cllr Julie O'Neill put forward the following question:

"Can the HSE confirm that they are 100% committed to building a Primary Care Centre on the grounds of the Aras Padraig. There is much speculation as whether or not the HSE will build on this site."

A written response from Ms Julie O'Neill, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Kerry, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr Moloney acknowledged the response and that it stated that the provision of a Primary Care facility on the grounds of Áras Phádraig site is a joint venture planning application with Kerry County Council.

(i) Cllr Margaret McDonnell put forward the following question:

"Could I have an update on the Primary Care Centre in Mayfield?"

A written response from Ms Sonya Cotter, Integrated Healthcare Area Manager Cork North and East, HSE South West was circulated to members and noted. Cllr McDonnell acknowledged the response and thanked the HSE Management for it.

6. Date and Time of next meeting - 18th September 2025 at 11am. Venue: Council Chambers, Cork County Council, County Hall, Cork