



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh
Eagraíocht Phobail um Chúram Sláinte
Corcaigh & Ciarraí - Limistéar 4
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Páirc Gnó Model
Bóthar na Modh Feirme
Corcaigh

Office of the Chief Officer
Community Healthcare Organisation
Cork & Kerry – Area 4
Health Service Executive
Model Business Park
Model Farm Road
Cork

Teil/Tel: 028-40404
Facs/Fax: 028-22382

18 October 2016

Mr. John Brassil, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

RE: PQ 28409/16

“To ask the Minister for Health the position of the HSE with regard to the closure of a home (details supplied); the reason this closure has taken place; if it is due to a lack of funding to meet HIQA requirements to provide the necessary funding to Saint John Of Gods to bring the accommodation up to standard,; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Details supplied: St Mary's of the Angels Beaufort Co. Kerry,

Dear Deputy Brassil,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The HSE plan to implement Government policy in relation to supports delivered through the health service to people with disabilities is set out in the Transforming Lives programme.

The thrust of this policy is to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities in local communities. This involves a move from specialist centres to supporting people to live in local communities and participate in community activities.

“A Time to Move on from Congregated Settings” (2011) is the policy which recognises the need to support people with disabilities to move from large congregated settings to community living. The aim of this policy is outlined as “ordinary lives in ordinary places”.

In line with this policy, St John of God Services campus in Beaufort has been identified as one of a small number of priority sites for de-congregation. A ‘congregated setting’ is defined as one where ten or more people reside in a single living unit or are campus based.

St John of God Services are working in collaboration with the HSE to implement a new model of residential support where people with disabilities are supported to live ordinary lives in ordinary places, with no more than four people with a disability living together in houses that are dispersed throughout the local community. There are currently a total of 77 adults with intellectual disabilities residing on the Beaufort campus. Of these, 17 people are accommodated in old style ward facilities. An additional 60 people live in

bungalow style accommodation on the campus. This ward style accommodation is unsuitable as it does not meet HIQA standards, and is contrary to the HSE policy on Transforming Lives. The HSE is committed to working with St John of God Services to transition 17 residents from the current unsuitable accommodation on campus to more appropriate settings in the local community. In 2016 this was identified as one of a number of priority sites for decongregation nationally further to being highlighted by HIQA as a high risk area.

In May 2014, all families received correspondence from St John of God Services advising them of the HSE published policy called *A Time to Move On From Congregated Settings* and advising that a Development Committee was being set up to plan and explore with service users and their families the community options available within the county and a strategy for future housing requirements. Reassurance was given to families that individual's plans would be made in conjunction with each person and their family. Family members would be contacted on an individual basis to participate in planning for their relative living in St. Mary of the Angels.

A funding application in relation to this process was submitted by St. John of Gods in 2015. Two family representatives were part of the group that prepared the funding application. All families and staff of the service were briefed in regard to the application process and content at that time.

St John of God Services operates a person-centred planning process within its services which is central to the way in which they deliver services right across County Kerry. This is the primary process used for consultation with each resident and their family members to identify their current and future needs. This includes:

- On an annual basis a meeting convened with the individual which includes their family members and their circle of support, keyworker, unit managers (multi-disciplinary if required). This affords an opportunity to meet to discuss the individual's needs and wishes.
- Each resident within St. Mary of the Angels has a nominated keyworker to support and advocate on behalf of each individual.
- Part of this process includes discussions around their preferred 'living options'.

In April 2015, at the regular Family Forum meeting, an overview of the HIQA regulations and an update in relation to de-congregation was provided. Throughout 2015 and 2016, the primary focus of Saint John of God Kerry Services has been on addressing the high risk areas of the HIQA action plan and in particular the issues relating to fire safety. There was significant consultation with residents and their families while this work was undertaken as some residents were temporarily relocated while the work was completed. Since the completion of this action plan, consultation regarding transition to community settings has commenced with a number of service users and their families. These are the people identified as being most suitable to participate in the first phase of this de-congregation project.

On the 18th of September 2016, a Family Forum meeting took place and discussions were held around HIQA inspections and de-congregation. Concerns were raised and many family members were concerned that their relative would not be suitable for community living. Some attendees stated that not enough information had been given around de-congregation. Assurances at the meeting were provided that this was being done on a phased basis through the use of 'community transition plans' and would only be done if it improved the life of the individual. It was agreed that a Family Representative group would be set up and a meeting with the Senior Management of Saint John of God Kerry Services was agreed.

Following recent media coverage, family members of all service users on the campus were contacted and provided with reassurance that they would be fully consulted and involved in any changes relating to their family member's current living situation in St. Mary of the Angels. There continues to be ongoing communication between St. John of God Services with residents, family members and staff in relation to the decongregation process.

Inclusion Ireland have been working with families and the HSE in a number of similar centres around the country. Inclusion Ireland have been approached by the families of residents in St Mary of the Angels and will work with the HSE and St. John Of Gods to ensure that families are fully involved in decision making at all levels.

The HSE will continue to work with St. John of Gods to address any concerns raised by families. I can assure you that the plans being put in place are not informed by a lack of funding. The guiding principle

and sole aim is to ensure that the best interests of each resident in St Mary of the Angels are provided for; that they enjoy a better quality of life and have the best opportunity for inclusion in the community.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ger Reaney". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ger Reaney
Chief Officer
ger.reaney@hse.ie