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Minister delivers blow to families

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Disabilities Minister Finian McGrath delivered a hammer blow to St Mary of the Angels families this week in signalling his full support for the 'decongregation' policy behind moves to relocate long-term residents into houses scattered across the county.

Minister McGrath's comments add fuel to the fire of an increasingly embittered row, pitting families of residents at the Beaufort centre against the St John of God charity which operates the centre, and the HSE which is responsible for rolling out the decongregation policy nationally.

St John of God, the HSE and Minister McGrath said that nothing will happen without lengthy consultation with families, a point emphasised by St John of God CEO Clare Dempsey in a statement on Tuesday. Ms Dempsey insisted St Mary of the Angels 'is not closing' but in the same statement said the charity is 'committed to working with each resident, and their family to achieve the best outcomes for and with each person' in relation

to the community transition plan.

Kerryman