

'Move will traumatisise residents' nurses warn

By **DÓNAL NOLAN**

RESIDENTS of a care home in Killarney the HSE is planning to close by next year will be 'traumatised' by having to move into houses in the community, nurses caring for them are warning this week.

21 adults with intellectual disabilities currently resident in the Cluain Fhionnain centre in Killarney, which was established following the closure of St Finan's, are to be moved out into individual houses in the community as part of the same policy causing controversy at St Mary of the Angels in Beaufort.

The Cluain Fhionnain home was the subject of a HIQA report last week which found the model

of care there 'institutionalised' - of the kind now being targeted under the national decongregation policy to close care homes where residents live side-by-side in order to move them into houses in the wider community.

Among the other findings of the HIQA report this week was that staff had contributed to a delay in progressing the closure of Cluain Fhionnain and that 'restrictive practices' were observed by inspectors in part of the home.

But the Psychiatric Nurses' Association of Kerry (PNA) hit back at the claims in a stinging rebuke to HIQA this week in which they warned that most residents would find it extremely difficult to 'tran-

sition' to community living - exactly as parents at St Mary of the Angels are warning.

"Given that over 80 per cent of the residents of Cluain Fhionnain have spent up to 40 years in institutional type settings, the change to a community setting will be very difficult and traumatic for the vast majority," PNA spokesperson Cormac Williams wrote to HIQA. Mr Williams hit back at the suggestion staff were slowing the closure, saying the 'tsunami' of paperwork they have been forced to deal with while carrying out regular duties was leading to anger among nurses at a time when staffing levels had already been cut back at the home.

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'Congregated' Killarney facility to close by 2017

By DÓNAL NOLAN

RESIDENTS of a care home in Killarney the HSE is planning to close by next year will be 'traumatised' by having to move into houses in the community, staff working with them are warning this week.

21 adults with intellectual disabilities currently resident in the Cluain Fhionnain centre in Killarney, which was established following the closure of St Finan's, are to be moved out into individual houses in the community as part of the same policy causing such controversy at St Mary of the Angels in Beaufort at present.

The Cluain Fhionnain home was the subject of a HIQA report this week which found the model of care there 'institutionalised' - of the kind now being targeted by the HSE's national decongregation policy to close up care homes where many residents live together with care staff side-by-side and to move them into the wider community.

Among the other findings of the HIQA report this week was that staff had contributed to a delay in progressing the closure of Cluain Fhionnain and that 'restrictive practices' were observed by inspectors in part of the home.

But the Psychiatric Nurses's Association of Kerry hit back at the claims in a stinging rebuke to HIQA this week in which they warned

that residents would find it extremely difficult to 'transition' to community living - exactly as parents at St Mary of the Angels are warning.

"Given that over 80 per cent of the residents of Cluain Fhionnain have spent up to 40 years in institutional type settings the change to a community settings will be very difficult and traumatic for the vast majority," PNA spokesperson Cormac Williams wrote to HIQA inspector Mary Moore on foot of the report.

He said the PNA were deeply disappointed at what he termed the 'implicit' suggestion nursing staff there were responsible for slowing the transition process.

"Since this process of change and transition has commenced over 2 years ago a tsunami of paper work including reports, plans and proposals from HIQA, Rehab, HSE and others has been given to staff to implement.... The daily routines of the units has been disrupted with the coming and goings of many outside staff from HIQA, Rehab and many other organisations which has taken up far more of the staff's time and efforts on a daily basis."

Mr Williams said that staff were frustrated and angry trying to deal with the extra workload at a time when their numbers had already been slashed under cutbacks. And he said the 'restrictive practices' were vital in ensuring the safety of the more profoundly-disabled residents.