

# Staff level concerns at St Mary of the Angels

By SINEAD KELLEHER

CONCERNS about staffing levels and the complaints procedures at St Mary of the Angels in Beaufort have been raised by a HIQA report this week.

The HIQA report also raises issues about unsuitable accommodation at the Beaufort Centre - something which is being addressed by the parents and relatives group at the centre. The work the group is carrying out was praised by HIQA.

The HIQA visit took place on December 13, 14 and 15 last year. Overall, St Mary of the Angels was compliant in most areas but some concerns were raised by HIQA, particularly with regard to skills mix of staff and the shortage of staff - both of which are affecting residents at the centre.

The HIQA report found that residents were unable to achieve their personal goals because of a lack of staff. This included the cancellation of a proposed holiday for residents last year.

In September 2017 there were 12 days of staff shortages at the centre which led to a reduction in social outings for residents.

St John of Gods said in response to the concerns that the use of staff would be reviewed to utilise staff in the best way, as well as future planning of staff to meet shortages.

According to HIQA, issues identified in previous inspections around the staffing skill mix, the provision of meaningful activities and providing appropriate placements for the residents were still not under-

taken and that this showed that management "struggled to direct resources to meet the needs of residents".

The complaints procedure was also criticised with one documented complaint not recorded on the electronic log where all such complaints were meant to be recorded and there no record of a follow-up to a documented complaint, HIQA found.

It also found a lack of clarity on who the complaints officer is, and stated that verbal complaints were asked for in writing, impeding the process.

Actions are to be taken surrounding this process including an audit of all complaints. The complaint not documented has now been logged and clarity will be given to staff surrounding the complaints.

Concerns about residents' personal monies had been raised in previous HIQA reports and, following from this, audits had been commissioned on the management of residents' personal property and finance. These were completed. Monies had been reimbursed and staff had been given guidelines on spending for residents.

However, HIQA noted that more needed to be done surrounding residents' personal monies.

"While there was evidence to support financial oversight in each house, and no evidence to indicate ongoing inappropriate practice, a formal campus-wide audit of the implementation of the revised financial procedures and practice had not been completed," the report stated.