

Covid-19 outbreak at St Mary of the Angels

EIGHT CASES CONFIRMED; FIVE
RESIDENTS AMONG THOSE AFFECTED

By **TADHG EVANS**

FIVE residents and three staff members at St Mary of the Angels' campus in Beaufort have tested positive for COVID-19, St John of God Kerry Services has confirmed.

The service provider for the facility, which is home to roughly 75 residents with physical and intellectual disabilities, outlined the information in response to queries this week by *The Kerryman*. At least one resident was hospitalised. A review of COVID-19 management procedures has taken place, St John of God Kerry Services said, while lead worker representatives

have been appointed to conduct internal audits and oversee compliance with public-health requirements.

The spokesperson insisted that the situation is confined to one unit at the campus and "has been managed in line with all public health guidance from the outset".

"One of the residents was subsequently admitted to hospital for a short period but has since been discharged, is now back at home in the centre and continuing to isolate along with four other residents," the statement read. "All staff and residents impacted are currently doing very well." **SEE PAGE FOUR**

Eight COVID cases confirmed at Saint Mary of the Angels

By TADHG EVANS

ST John of God Kerry Services has confirmed that an outbreak of COVID-19 has taken place at the St Mary of the Angels campus in Beaufort, with eight cases confirmed as of 2pm yesterday (Tuesday).

A spokesperson for service provider St John of God Kerry Services confirmed the outbreak in response to queries by *The Kerryman*. Of the eight people affected, five are residents and three are staff members at the centre, which is home to roughly 75 residents with physical and intellectual disabilities.

The Kerryman is aware of at least one resident who was hospitalised after contracting the virus. The patient has since been discharged and is continuing their recovery.

The Saint John of God Kerry services response outlined that a review of the procedures to manage COVID-19 has taken place and that "the requirement to maintain adherence to these procedures at all times is re-emphasised". Lead worker representatives have recently been appointed to conduct internal audits and oversee compliance with public-health requirements, a move which Saint John of God Kerry services outlined is in line with HSA and public-health guidelines.

The Saint Mary of the Angels Parents and Relatives Associa-



St Mary of the Angels, Beaufort. Photo by Michelle Cooper Galvin

tion has declined to comment at this time, but *The Kerryman* understands that the outbreak has caused deep concern amongst the families of those affected, and they have questioned how the virus entered into the facility and spread to those affected.

Despite *The Kerryman's* queries, it remains unclear as to when the first confirmed case was diagnosed, and whether this person was a member of staff or otherwise.

"The situation is contained to one residential location onsite," the St John of God Kerry Services spokesperson told this newspaper. "Staff and residents have all been tested and public health protocols initiated, with those testing positive immediately being isolated in accordance with public health

guidelines.

"One of the residents was subsequently admitted to hospital for a short period but has since been discharged and is now back at home in the centre and continuing to isolate along with four other residents. All staff and residents impacted are currently doing very well.

"This situation has been managed in line with all public health guidance from the outset. The service is receiving ongoing support in the procedures to manage COVID-19 from the HSE and the public health team, and staff have received additional training.

"We wish to acknowledge and recognise our staff and the work they continue to do to support those individuals and their families at this difficult time."