



Office of the Head of Primary Care
Services
Community Health Organisation
Midlands Louth Meath

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30th April 2024

Deputy Brian Stanley
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re: PQ17633/24 - To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on the provision of a hospice for the midlands region: to outline the level of funding available; and the approximate timeline for provision of the facility.

Dear Deputy Stanley

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. I have examined the matter and outlined the position as follows.

In September 2022, the government announced the provision of €20 million in capital funding for a 20-bed inpatient Palliative Care facility for the Midlands region to be located on the campus of Midlands Regional Hospital Tullamore (MRHT). In March 2023, a capital approval letter was received confirming approval for a total project cost of €23.9m to include construction, design team fees and equipping. Following the government announcement, a competition was initiated to procure a design team from the national Design Team Frameworks and the design team were appointed in May 2023.

In April 2023 an unsolicited site offer (Arden Lane) was received by the HSE. The decision was made by HSE senior management that the site merited due consideration and so a site options appraisal exercise was undertaken with input from Palliative Care Clinicians, HSE Capital & Estates & HSE senior management. The process concluded that Arden Lane site was the most appropriate site on which to develop the palliative care facility. As the comparison between the MRHT and Arden Lane site was being concluded in late September 2023, the HSE were offered a third site (Wellwood Healthcare park adjacent to MRHT) from Offaly Hospice. Following discussions with the Department of Health the decision was made to also give this site due consideration and so the options appraisal study was expanded to include this third site in the assessment. The decision was also made to allow the hospice groups input into this site options appraisal study encompassing the three sites. Following the conclusion of this extended review in December 2023, the recommendation was that the Arden Lane site was the most appropriate site.

On 16th February 2024, the Minister for Health, Mr. Stephen Donnelly met with senior HSE management, HSE Palliative Care Consultants and representatives from the Hospice Groups to discuss the three sites. The Minister advised that he would consider the options appraisal recommendations and confirm the selected site for the new proposed palliative care facility.



The delivery programme for all three sites is broadly similar at circa 3.5 years from commencement of design to completion of the construction phase assuming no unforeseen delays. We await a final decision from the Minister.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Grainne McGill'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'G' and 'M'.

Grainne McGill
A/Head of Primary Care Services
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation