



Ceannasai na Seirbhísi Curam Michumais General Manager of Disability Services – Louth Meath

Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail Lár Tire
An Lú, An Mhí,
Oifig Ceantair, Bóthar Cheanannais, Bhaile
Átha Fhirdia, Co. Lú

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19th November 2024

Deputy Darren O'Rourke,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: PQ 45090/24 - To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the measures being taken to support the children in the special care unit at Johnstown, Navan, as they transition to a school (St. Mary's Special School), to ensure their educational and care needs are met; if HSE staff will move with them from the special care unit to the school; and if he will make a statement on the matter – Darren O'Rourke

Dear Deputy O'Rourke,

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.

The HSE would like to advise that the Special Care Unit, Bailis Resource Centre, Johnstown, Navan, is not closing. The unit is relocating to the new school building at St Mary's Special School campus. It was always the intention that the Special Care Unit would relocate to the new school building so these children can attend their educational placement along with their peers. There are two large classrooms identified in the new school to facilitate the twelve children enrolled in the Special Care Unit, part of St Mary's Special School.

The planned staffing ratio for each of the new classrooms is 1 teacher to 6 children, 2 SNA's & one Nurse. The HSE has approved funding to provide 3 Whole Time Equivalent nurses to St Mary's Special School. The Governance of the nurses will come under HSE Disability Nursing Governance Structures.

The current Care assistants from the SCU are not required within St Mary's Special School due to SNAs in place with a similar role. The HSE have reviewed the job description for SNAs and are happy that it meets the criteria required to ensure that the current level of specialist support will be maintained.

The HSE are currently working in collaboration with the school principle and board of management in developing a Memorandum of Understanding.

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,

Wanetta Duff.

Wanetta Duff
General Manager, Disability Services, HSE Louth Meath CHO