



30th March 2020

Dear Family Member

I am writing to update you on the actions we are taking to mitigate against the Covid-19 pandemic and also to bring you up to speed on the implications in respect of the ongoing funding crisis we face at Saint John of God Community Services.

As you are aware, we have introduced wide-ranging preventative measures across the Service in a bid to minimise the spread of the Corona virus and we are working vigilantly to follow all the public health guidelines as issued by the HSE and the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). This unprecedented situation has necessitated the closure of some services, the curtailment of a wide range of other activities, as well as significant changes in the daily routines and in how our staff and residents go about doing their everyday activities. This has required a huge amount of effort and adjustment on everybody's part, and I want to acknowledge and thank you for your understanding. Very many of our staff and volunteers are going above and beyond what is required to maintain services and provide the care needed to those who rely and depend on us, and in doing so are truly demonstrating the core values of hospitality and care which underpin our organisation.

As you recall, I wrote to you at the start of March to inform you about the very serious funding challenges facing the organisation. We wrote to the HSE at that time to advise that, if the accumulated deficit and current funding requirement were not addressed, we might be left with no option but to transfer responsibility for service provision to the HSE. We have had contact with the HSE over the intervening period on this matter but as you can understand, the issue has been overtaken by the national crisis that has emerged in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our Board met again last week and decided in light of the unprecedented nature of the national crisis facing our health services and the country as a whole, that we would defer any further actions on this matter for the immediate future. This decision has been taken purely in the national interest and in no way detracts from the serious funding crisis that continues to threaten the future sustainability of our services. The Board resolved to revisit this issue again within the next 3 months.

The Board of Saint John of God Community Services and the Leadership Team understand that these are very challenging times for the families of those relying on our services. I appeal to you to stay positive about the future and assure you that we will continue to do all in our power to manage Coronavirus and our funding issues. I will keep you informed of all developments as they unfold.

We have posted information on our website (www.sjog.ie) under the heading information Covid-19. You may find some of this information to be of assistance and support through these challenging times. Finally may I wish you and your family good health and well being, particularly in the weeks and months ahead.

Yours sincerely

Clare Dempsey
Chief Executive

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