



Saint John of God Hospitaller Services Group

Dear Colleagues,

4th August 2021

I am delighted that it has been possible to suspend the notification to transfer to the HSE the Intellectual Disability and Community Mental Health Services we provide through Saint John of God Community Services. Those services are a very significant component of our mission in Ireland.

The Order of Saint John of God established Mental Health Services in Ireland in 1882, and Intellectual Disability Services in 1924, and the Order has sponsored the expansion and development of those services throughout the intervening years. Responsibility for sponsorship has now been transferred to the Board of Sponsors of the Group, and that Board shares the commitment to those services.

Services can, of course, only be provided if sufficient funds are available. The “Sustainability Impact Assessment” (SIA) process proposed by Paul Reid (CEO of the HSE) and Robert Watt (Secretary General of the Department of Health) provides the opportunity to develop, with the HSE, a funding model for the future that ensures adequate funding for an “exemplary” model of service. Meanwhile the HSE has provided assurances that the required funds will be available to enable us to deliver the services while the SIA process is in progress.

The amount entrusted to us by the State and by donors is very substantial, and imposes a great responsibility to ensure that, while providing services to the desired standards, our funders can be assured that we are diligent in the management of those funds. The SIA process provides the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to diligent use of funds.

The suspension of the notification provides a new and welcome impetus to the work underway on our Group Strategy. 54 colleagues from across the Group continue their work on our 6 Strategic Priorities: Group Purpose and Mission; Values; Governance; Identity; Measurement of Service Performance; and Advocacy. I once again thank all involved for their participation and I look forward to a meeting in September when all participants will have the opportunity to meet (virtually) to share information on their progress and plans.

Finally, on behalf of the Group Board, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous response across the Group to the challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic. I attach comments from the CEOs of the services which express their appreciation for the response of their teams. That positive response was evident across all of the companies in the Saint John of God Organisation, and in our schools, and was demonstrated by front line and by administration and support colleagues. Many thanks to all - I believe you have reason to be proud.

Sincerely

Conor McCarthy
Group CEO

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Saint John of God Hospitaller Services Group dg is a company limited by guarantee.

Directors: Mary Collins, Bill Cunningham, William Forkan, John Gallagher, Anne Gunning, Anthony Hanna, John Lennon, Robert Moore, Mary Philomena O'Donovan. Registered office: Granada, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin, A94 D9N1

Reg. Company No. 568740 **Reg. Charity No.** CHY 21436 **CRA No.** 20106515

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Saint John of God Hospitaller Services Group

Comments from CEOs

“The response to Covid 19 from staff has been outstanding throughout the pandemic. Despite the significant challenges created by Covid at work and in the broader community, our staff found new and creative ways to care for the people we support, and to work with their families to lessen the impact of Covid 19 as much as possible. They have also continued to provide top quality care and support for our Residents, despite potential infection risk to themselves and their families. Staff members have also shown great commitment, flexibility and innovation in dealing with the new challenges presented by the pandemic.

Staff have risen to the challenges presented and should be very proud of the contribution they have made. They have consistently demonstrated their commitment to our values in a very meaningful way”

Clare Dempsey (CEO, Saint John of God Community Services)

“I cannot be more proud of and thankful of every colleague working in the hospital and Saint Joseph’s for the way that they have all dealt with what has been an extraordinarily challenging eighteen months. We have kept our vital services going and ensured that those who need access to mental health and dementia services could do so, despite Covid-19. Innovative virtual programmes were developed which provided essential care and support for those who could not access services in person.

We have had to work differently in order to ensure that we followed the multitude of protocols, procedures and policies that have flowed from the Department of Health and HPSC and we have put measures in place to protect each other and those who use our services in the best way possible. Across all departments, clinical and non-clinical, we have seen the very best in our colleagues and each person’s contribution and commitment is of great benefit to those who use our services and their families”

Emma Balmaine (CEO, Saint John of God Hospital)

“Our colleagues have #staypositive shared over 300 images and news about what they’ve done during lockdown to support the people we are here to serve and each other.

Our services have also been trialling ATP testing to improve infection control. This has been part of a research programme called Swab Mob. The paper: ‘Swab Mob! Using Adenosine Triphosphate screening to improve environmental cleaning practice in residential care settings during Covid-19’ will be presented at the national infection control in September

Mainly though our colleagues have been routinely brilliant. They have been supporting the people we are here to serve, turning up every day even during the darkest times, dealing with bereavements in their own families and putting the needs of others first.”

Paul Bott (CEO, SJOG UK)

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