

# Health service back to its old 'bad habits' as Covid crisis slowly fading

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THE A&E trolley crisis is back – just as the Covid-19 pandemic appears to ease.

It is another signal that normality is returning, even if it is among the more unwelcome signs.

Nurses reported yesterday that hospital overcrowding reached a level that was the highest in a year.

There were 376 patients on trolleys who needed a hospital bed.

They included 75 in University Hospital Limerick, 31 in Letterkenny Hospital, 30 in Cork University Hospital, 24 in Mullingar Hospital and 23 in South Tipperary General Hospital.

Karen McGowan, President of the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO), said: "Although the levels of Covid-19 are reducing, the long-standing trolley crisis is again rearing its head."

"Our members are seriously

is to be intensified under a new Government health plan.

The plan, which aims to tackle health inequalities, calls for more tobacco-free spaces in community settings next year.

The right of smokers to have a cigarette outdoors is set to become a hot-button issue as hospitality reopens next month and people will have to take to beer gardens and outside dining.

The new plan involves a series of objectives around areas of lifestyle and wellbeing including obesity, mental health and healthy homes across different Government departments.

The Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025 was published by Health Minister Stephen Donnelly and Minister of State Frank Feighan. However, there were no costings or funding attached.

They said a core component of the implementation of Sláintecare – the blueprint for the future of the health service – is this Healthy Ireland strategy which will have a particular emphasis on reducing inequality.

It will involve a comprehensive cross-government approach, with a total of 14 departments responsible for implementing 56 actions across six themes over the next five years.

Each action will be led by one of 14 separate Government departments.

Targets over the next three years include:

- Implementation of a healthy campus programme in 30 third-level institutions.

- Helping 4,500 people to live in their own home "with dignity and independence" through the Sláintecare age-friendly healthy homes scheme.

- Developing new policies and action plans addressing sexual health, physical activity, nutrition, obesity and mental-health promotion.

- Adding 500 more clubs to the GAA health clubs model, as well as driving participation among other sporting organisations.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin said: "We are thankfully beginning to slowly emerge from the pandemic and we know more than ever before that people have a greater focus on their health."

**Healthy Ireland:**  
Minister Simon Donnelly launched action plan

concerned that we will swing from the Covid-19 crisis back into the overcrowding crisis.

"They need to know that the HSE will not tolerate overcrowding and ensure that safe staffing levels are implemented."

Union chief Phil Ní Sheaghda cautioned about slipping back into "bad habits" and said overcrowding is unsafe for patients, particularly in a pandemic.

Last week the HSE said attendances at A&E were on par with the levels seen at the height of the flu season when they are flooded with people seeking emergency care.

There has been a particular increase in the number of people over 75 presenting at A&E departments.

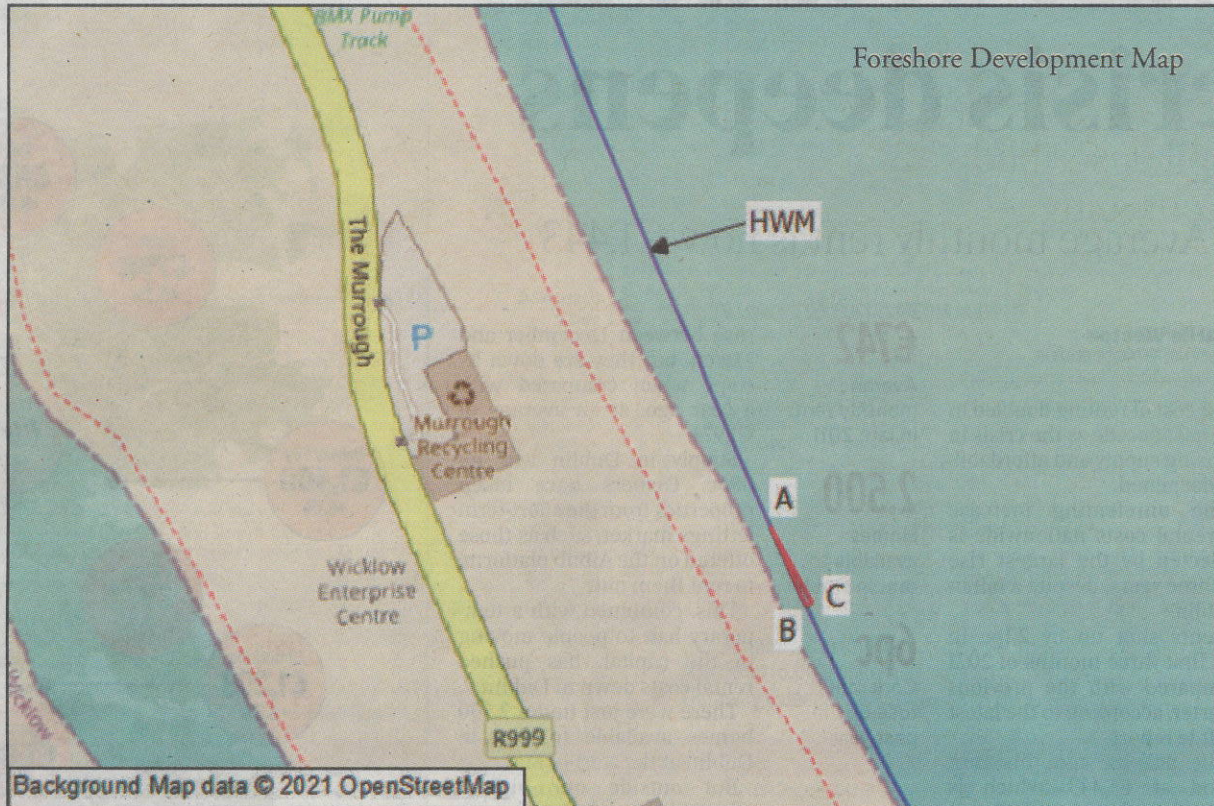
If admitted, this age group tends to have a longer stay in hospital.

Although it is welcome to see people are not afraid to attend hospitals, it also signposts the problems ahead with a return to overcrowding.

Meanwhile, the war on smokers lighting up outdoors

## PUBLIC NOTICE APPLICATION FOR A FORESHORE LEASE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 19 of the Foreshore Act, 1933 that the Office of Public Works, Jonathan Swift Street, Trim, Co. Meath, C15 NX36 has applied to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for a Foreshore lease under Section 2 of the said Act to undertake maintenance works at the existing rock revetment at The Murrough, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow. The maintenance works will consist of the re-profiling of the existing revetment, placement of a single layer of 3-6 tonne rock armour over the top and placement of a gabion mattress at the toe of the structure over a distance of 265m.



The co-ordinates of the proposed development within the foreshore are set out in the table below.

| Point | Easting (ITM) | Northing (ITM) |
|-------|---------------|----------------|
| A     | 731373.52     | 694635.42      |
| B     | 731386.33     | 694607.68      |
| C     | 731388.42     | 694608.86      |

A copy of the application, and the relevant documents, maps, plans, and drawings, are available for inspection, between **13 May 2021** and **13 June 2021**, free of charge at:

- Wicklow Garda Station, Bachelor's Walk, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow (24 hours).**

The National Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions Regulations published under the Health Act 1947 (Statutory Instrument No. 448 of 2020) have identified planning-related activity within the schedule of what is considered to be 'essential services' in order to ensure the continued and safe operation of all aspects of the statutory planning system.

The Regulations permit a person to attend the offices of a planning authority or An Bord Pleanála to engage in a statutory planning process. There is no specified restriction on the distance that persons engaging in a statutory planning process, may travel. This approach also applies to this foreshore public consultation.

The documentation is available on the Department's website at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/5e9e9-opw-wicklow-town-revetment-repairs/>

Any person who wishes to make an objection to, or a representation in respect of the grant of the lease and licence sought as part of this public consultation should do so in writing, giving reasons, between **13 May 2021** and **13 June 2021** (quoting ref: FS 007004) to the **Marine Environment and Foreshore Section, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford** or **foreshore@housing.gov.ie**. The closing date for submissions is **close of business (17.30) on 13 June 2021**.

All objections and representations received will be forwarded to the applicant for comment prior to any decision being made in the matter. Material upon which the Minister shall determine this application may be published on the Department's website. In this regard the Department wishes to draw attention to its policy on defamatory material that may be contained in submissions it receives, which may be found at:

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/foreshore/public-participation-foreshore-consent-process>

**Dated this 12th day of May 2021.**

**Office of Public Works, Jonathan Swift Street,  
Trim, Co. Meath, C15 NX36.**



**OPW**

Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works