

Office of the Minister

26 October 2006

Mr Terry Fallon  
A/Senior Staff Officer  
South Dublin County Council  
Corporate Services Department  
County Hall  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24



**DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH AND  
CHILDREN**  
AN ROINN  
SLÁINTE AGUS LEANAÍ

Quality and Fairness  
A Health System for You

Dear Mr Fallon

The Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney TD, has asked me to refer to your letter on behalf of South Dublin County Council concerning the new national tertiary paediatric hospital

The Minister has asked me to say that a review of tertiary paediatric services undertaken by McKinsey & Company on behalf of the Health Service Executive (HSE) made the following key recommendations:

- The population and projected demands in this country can support only one world class tertiary paediatric hospital
- It should be in Dublin, and should ideally be co-located with a leading adult academic hospital (i.e. should be within a practical walking distance of such a hospital)
- It should also provide all the secondary (i.e. less complex) hospital needs of children in the Greater Dublin area
- These secondary services should be supported by strategically-located Urgent Care Centres.

When the report was published, each of the Dublin paediatric hospitals (including The Adelaide and Meath Hospital, incorporating the National Children's Hospital) expressed strong support for the development of a single paediatric hospital, and emphasized the need for early decisions in relation to its location. Paediatric Consultants expressed their willingness to move to the new hospital regardless of its location.

Following extensive examination, discussion and consultation, a joint HSE/Department of Health and Children Task Group recommended that the new national tertiary paediatric hospital should be built on a site to be made available by the Mater Hospital. This recommendation was accepted by the Board of the HSE and was subsequently endorsed by

**Hawkins House Dublin 2**  
Teach Haicín Baile Átha Cliath 2  
Telephone (01) 635 4000 VPN112  
Fax (01) 671 4508

the Government at its meeting on 8th June. The Government mandated the HSE to move forward with the development of the new hospital and its associated urgent care centres.

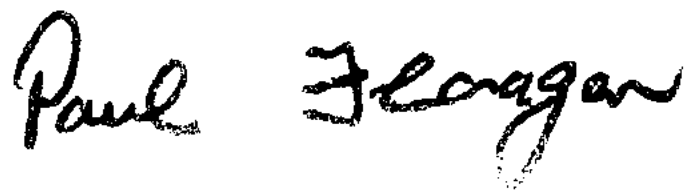
The Taoiseach, the Minister and the Chief Executive Officer of the HSE met with representatives of Tallaght Hospital, including Archbishop Eames, in June to discuss a number of issues, including the implications for the National Children's Hospital at Tallaght of the Government decision to endorse the development of a single national tertiary paediatric hospital at the Mater Hospital. In a letter to the Archbishop following the meeting, the Taoiseach gave an assurance that the Government wishes to see Tallaght Hospital thrive on a sustainable basis as a particular focal point for the involvement of the minority tradition in the healthcare system and as a key health provider to an expanding local population.

A joint HSE/Department of Health and Children Transition Group has been established to advance the development of the national tertiary paediatric hospital. Among the key items to be addressed are the definition of a high level framework brief for the new hospital and the determination of the range of services and location of the associated urgent care centres. The Group will have consultations with relevant stakeholders, which will include representatives of the National Children's Hospital at Tallaght.

To date, no decision has been taken in relation to the range of services to be provided at the National Children's Hospital at Tallaght in the context of the development of the national paediatric hospital and the associated urgent care centres.

I trust that this clarifies the matter for you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Flanagan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Paul Flanagan  
Private Secretary