

## **St. Michael's House -Family Frequently Asked Questions**

**December 16th 2020**

**Q. The Visitor Restrictions have reverted to Level 3 for service users , what plans are in place to support these persons?**

**A.** St. Michael's House are advised by NHPET and HSE guidelines on visitor restrictions. We know it is not for everyone but we are increasing our Digital activity, training and resources to support. The staff are working directly with families.

**Q. What are the plans for Christmas visits to and from services for Christmas period 2020?**

**A.** St. Michael's House wish to support families and service users to get together for Christmas, this will not be the usual Christmas for all and we ask that everybody meet up in as safe a manner as possible. Staff are informed and are working directly with families . There is also supporting information on our website.

**Q. How are staff supporting my family member being supported working in Covid-19 ?**

**A.** SMH provide monthly Infoshare webinars to educate and support staff on Health, Safety and Quality of services. There are new training courses and well being workshops to support all staff members during this time.

**Q. Why are Day Services still not returned to five days a week like Schools Nationwide ?**

**A.** Our service users are vulnerable to Covid-19 pandemic. The full return to Day services is limited by various factors. These would vary from locations and resources.

Barriers include :

- Access to transport for safe 2m distance
- Space in buildings for safe 2m distance
- Staff for service users ratio for safe delivery of services

We are working on all of the above elements to improve services for service users in Covid-19.

**Q. Why can SMH not recruit more staff to support the Day Services ?**

**A.** St. Michael's House is delighted to be notified from CHO DNCC ( Community Health Organisation, Dublin North City and County ) that the Department of Health has announced the availability of €7.5m in 2020 to support the full resumption of day services for people with disabilities.

St. Michael's House have been allocated the largest amount of posts: 39 of 67 posts.

The posts are as follows:

- 22 Health Care Assistants
- 17 Social Care Worker

We are actively recruiting for these posts.

**Q.What are the plans for School Leavers 2020 ?**

**A.** St.Michael's House aim to place all young adults who progress from the school system each year. There are more persons than places due to our growing population. However, the majority school leavers 2020 have commenced their placements and plans are in place for the remainder to start in the New Year.

**Q. How are SMH supporting families and service users with Digital communications ?**

**A.** St.Michael's House have;

- allocated €21,000 from fundraising to purchase digital devices to support service users to access services where possible. Over 25 units have bought digital devices to support service users to engage with services and family , access entertainment and keep connected during Covid-19.
- increased the Activity Hub supports, events and resources to ensure continual interaction and connection from and with service users
- introduced Browsealoud to our external website ( [www.smh.ie](http://www.smh.ie)) for audio and visual improvements for people with disabilities to access our website more during Covid-19

**Q. Are families being updated on changes from the Government re Covid-19 ?**

**A.** Our CEO, Liz Reynolds, has written monthly letters to Families. There are regular monthly updates on SMH.ie website.

There are end of year messages from CEO, Director of Children and Young Persons and Director of Adult Services on the website and in our December E-zine.

**Q. Have SMH supported structures for the New Year 2021 ?**

**A.** SMH relied on staff teams and working closely with family members to keep service users safe and to keep providing services where at all possible. We are very proud of our staff and family teamwork during this pandemic. SMH have adapted new structures and frameworks to continue providing services. There were some very sad times of loss during 2020 but our robust reactive structures limited the impact where possible.

We look forward to the New Year 2021 with hope for a brighter year and improved services for the men , women and children who use our services.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy Christmas Season and New Year

Please contact us with any questions  
**Thank you. [Communications@smh.ie](mailto:Communications@smh.ie)**