

# SINN FÉIN PROPOSALS FOR ADDRESSING OVERCROWDING IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

## INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HOSPITAL BEDS BY 500 - cost €153 million

### Rationale:

There were 862 less hospital beds in 2015 than in 2008. This is not just a bed problem; there are insufficient staff in the acute hospital system, insufficient exit packages and insufficient nursing home beds or home care options. The HSE have advised Sinn Féin, through parliamentary question, that the annual running cost for one bed is €306k, which is inclusive of staffing, theatres, laboratories, non-clinical staffing and other running costs. It is a fully absorbed cost.

## INCREASE HOME HELP HOURS BY 10% AND INCREASE HOME CARE PACKAGES BY 10% - cost €32.4 million

### Rationale:

Research on overcrowding in emergency departments consistently shows a direct, negative, correlation between ED waiting and length of inpatient stay and, crucially, with overall outcome. By supporting people in their homes, through the provision of home help hours and community supports, you are reducing the threats to patient safety and need for hospitalisation when care is provided where it is needed first.

## EMPLOY 600 ADDITIONAL FRONT LINE STAFF INCLUDING SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS, PHYSIOS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS - cost €30.4 million

### Rationale:

The persistent under-resourcing of primary and community care means people end up in hospital when they should and could be cared for in the community.

## ENSURE REGISTERED NURSE/DOCTOR-TO PATIENT RATIOS AND SUFFICIENT BEDS IN THE ACUTE HOSPITAL SECTOR TO DEAL WITH DEMAND AND DEMOGRAPHIC OF THE LOCAL AREA

### Rationale:

Nurses are now beyond breaking point as a result of the unsafe working environment they face every day and yet rather than invest in making our health service the kind of place they want to work in the Government continue to spend excessive amounts on agency staff. Between January and June 2016 alone (26 weeks), over €101 million was spent on 2440 whole time equivalent agency staff.

## ESTABLISH AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TASKFORCE ON A PERMANENT BASIS

### Rationale:

There needs to be a constant monitoring, assessment and overview of the Emergency Department situation nationwide, with a view to ensuring dissemination of adequate funding and resources where it is needed. But the taskforce must also be given the power to ensure that their recommendations are implemented.

