

NEWS RELEASE IMMEDIATE

ALONE support HIQA request for increased investigative power into nursing home complaints

Dublin, 22nd October ALONE, the charity that supports older people in need, is coming out in support of HIQA's request for increased investigative powers into individual nursing home complaints.

Sean Moynihan, Chief Executive Officer of ALONE commented, "Already there have been a number of serious cases reported since Leas cross, with many additional homes closed down. The Government needs to give HIQA the power to investigate individual complaints, to protect older people in nursing home care. Older people in nursing homes are in a very vulnerable position and they need to be supported."

Moynihan continued, "As individual complaints are investigated internally, older people and families may feel they can't speak out, for fear of losing their place in the home. Currently over 2000 people are waiting for nursing home care in the country, this makes nursing homes very powerful. People need to have an impartial external body to submit complaints to, this is an industry that needs to be properly regulated to ensure it is providing quality care."

"The current system means that if someone makes a complaint, HIQA don't have entitlement to investigate it further and the individual is sent back to the nursing home they are complaining about, it leaves vulnerable older people in a very powerless situation", said Moynihan.

ALONE believe that nursing homes are not always the answer, and strive to keep older people living within the community by providing suitable accommodation, home supports and social outlets. ALONE's model of supportive housing in the community makes sense to the individual, community and the economy.

ALONE can be contacted on (01) 679 1032 for those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in the community or visit www.alone.ie

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Established in 1977, ALONE is an independent charity that works with the 1 in 5 older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. We provide Supportive Housing, Befriending, Community Response and Campaigning services to hundreds of older people every week. We receive no Government funding for our day-to-day activities so we rely solely on the generosity of the public to continue our work. ALONE's services are quality approved and are delivered 365 days a year.

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