

Press Release



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Minister for Health Visits An Saol Foundation and Hears Urgent Call to Deliver National sABI Centre

Dublin, 23 April 2026 - The An Saol Foundation welcomed Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, Minister for Health, to its centre in Santry, where she met with people living with severe Acquired Brain Injury (sABI), their families, and supporters of the Foundation’s work, including local public representatives. The visit took place on 08 April 2026.

During the visit, the Foundation highlighted the ongoing absence of appropriate, person-centred long-term care pathways for people with severe Acquired Brain Injury (sABI) in Ireland, and emphasised the urgent need to progress **Teach an Saol** as a purpose-built, national service hub.

The Minister heard directly from individuals and families about the realities of living with sABI, including prolonged stays in acute hospital settings, the lack of suitable long-term supports, and the unacceptable placement of young people, including teenagers, in nursing homes.

Reinhard Schäler, CEO and Founder of the An Saol Foundation, said:

“People living with severe Acquired Brain Injury (sABI) continue to be left without appropriate, person-centred pathways of care. Teach an Saol is a ready, evidence-informed solution—a purpose-built service hub designed around their needs. What is now required is the delivery of the recommended funding and the leadership to move this forward without further delay.”

Minister for Health, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill TD said:

"An Saol Foundation provides an incredibly important service to people living with severe acquired brain injury and I was grateful for the opportunity to meet the team and spend time with patients and their families. It is encouraging to see the strong partnership between An Saol Foundation, the HSE and Dublin City Council to deliver a Hub of patient centred services which will improve outcomes for patients and their families with planning already underway to deliver a new capital development."

The Foundation reiterated the need for additional revenue funding, in line with the 2023 HSE recommendation, to enable the progression of services and the realisation of Teach an Saol as a national centre of excellence.

The Foundation welcomes the Minister's engagement and looks forward to continued collaboration with Government, the Health Service Executive, and Dublin City Council to progress the delivery of these essential services.


Notes to Editors

- The An Saol Foundation advocates for people living with severe Acquired Brain Injury (sABI), a group for whom there are currently no appropriate long-term, person-centred pathways of care in Ireland. sABI often results from traumatic brain injury, stroke, or lack of oxygen to the brain and typically requires lifelong, full-time support.
- The Foundation was established by the Schaler family, with the support of the HSE and the then Minister for Health, Simon Harris, following a personal plea supported by several families affected by sABI, in response to the absence of continuing services in Ireland.
- The An Saol Foundation Pilot Project (2020-2022) and subsequent HSE review identified significant gaps in service provision and recommended the development of dedicated, specialist services. Additional revenue funding, previously committed, is required to progress service development in line with 2023 HSE recommendations.
- Teach an Saol is a proposed purpose-built, national service Hub designed to provide specialised, person-centred care and support for individuals with sABI, enabling them to live with dignity, improve outcomes, and regain as much independence and self-determination as possible.
- An Saol Foundation CLG is a charity registered with the Irish Revenue Commissioners and the Irish Charities Regulatory Authority.

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