

# Nuns who owe millions in abuse reparations given hospital

Ellen Coyne

March 24 2017, 12:01am, The Times



A maternity hospital will be run by the Sisters of Charity's healthcare group  
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A religious order that owes millions of euros in compensation for child abuse will retain ownership of the new National Maternity Hospital after it is built with more than €200 million of taxpayers' money.

recent revelation that it still owes €3 million to the state redress scheme.

The new hospital will be built on the Elm Park site at St Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin. St Vincent's Healthcare Group is run and owned by the Sisters of Charity, which has paid only €2 million of the €5 million it offered to contribute in reparations to abuse victims. Its most recent payment was in 2013.

The religious order will own the maternity hospital as well as a new independent company that has been established to guarantee corporate governance, but the HSE has said that its interests will be protected once construction is completed. The HSE said the land at the St Vincent's campus was being made available for the new hospital at no cost to the state and that "appropriate security arrangements" would be put in place to protect state interests.

"As landowners, St Vincent's Healthcare Group have an ownership interest in facilities built on those lands," an HSE spokesman said. "However, the state as funder will ensure that its interests are protected through established mechanisms to ensure the long-term, ongoing provision of public maternity services."

benefit from owning the hospital after the state paid for its construction.

Simon Harris, the health minister, intends to pass a bill that will give the National Children's Hospital non-denominational governance. Unlike the maternity hospital, the new children's hospital will be owned by the state. The Department of Health said that there were "fundamental differences" between the two projects, including that the maternity hospital was moving to a site owned by St Vincent's.

A special report by the comptroller and auditor-general into the cost of the state's child abuse inquiry and redress scheme this month said that the Sisters of Charity still owed €3 million. The order ran five industrial schools, including St Patrick's and St Joseph's in Kilkenny and at Madonna House in Dublin respectively.

Brendan Howlin, the Labour leader, said that the report and recent discovery of a mass grave at the Tuam mother and baby home — run by a separate religious order, the Bons Secours — meant that it was inappropriate for congregations to maintain control of state assets such as maternity hospitals.

"Given the events of recent weeks, not to mention the failure of religious congregations to meet their share of the cost of redress, it seems extraordinary to see the state continuing to fund an increase in the asset values of those same congregations," Mr Howlin said. "The Labour party believes that into the future all buildings that are funded by the state should be owned by the state."

Micheál Martin, the Fianna Fáil leader, has previously called for all hospitals owned by the Catholic Church, including St Vincent's, to be handed over to the state. A spokeswoman for the party said that Mr Martin stood by those statements.

between €200 and €300 million after the project was delayed by a row over who would run it.

Management at the existing National Maternity Hospital wanted to keep its independence from the St Vincent's group, which is run on a Catholic ethos.

Peter Boylan, chairman of the Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, claimed last year that Catholic hospitals around the world had banned the provision of modern contraceptive services, IVF, sterilisation operations and gender re-assignment surgery. He also raised concerns about the full implementation of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act, which provides for an abortion if a mother's life is at risk. The hospital denied Dr Boylan's claims, describing them as groundless.

As part of an agreement between the management of both hospitals, overseen by Kieran Mulvey, the former head of the Labour Court, it was agreed that a new company would be set up to handle the governance issue. The company, called The National Maternity Hospital at Elm Park DAC (limited by shares), will be a subsidiary of St Vincent's Healthcare Group.

When the new maternity hospital at St Vincent's campus is complete the existing Holles Street premises will be given to the state.

The Sisters of Charity would not comment and directed *The Times* to their healthcare group. A spokesman for the group echoed the HSE's statement that the state's interests would be protected through an "appropriate legal arrangement". He said that the land the hospital was being built on was being made available by St Vincent's "at no cost to the taxpayer".

The Department of Health said that it was government policy to co-locate maternity hospitals with acute hospitals like St Vincent's. "Arrangements will be in place to ensure that the state's investment and interests in the new hospital will be

services,” the department said in a statement.



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**John Fulham** Mar 24, 2017

When is Justice to be brought to bear on these murderers.

Cromwell did not slaughter babies, William of Orange never slaughtered babies. Black and Tans never slaughtered babies. I am minded of the trains arriving at Auschwitz, the mothers are made to strip naked and they are marched at bayonet point with their babies into the "showers " with their infants in their arms. They were carried out into the Gas Ovens, these infants of Tuam were hidden in pits.

The Pieta` of Michelangelo, would weep as it depicts a mothers love for her child, St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, would flood with the torrent of tears!

# Ministers kept in the dark over British spy

Ellen Coyne

April 13 2017, 12:01am, The Times



Mark Kennedy worked as an undercover agent for the British police infiltrating protest groups, including in Ireland

PHILIPP EBELING/THE GUARDIAN



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A secret report on a British police spy has revealed that the former garda commissioner refused to deny that he gave permission for an undercover UK officer to work in Ireland.

Martin Callinan defended “confidential” arrangements that the gardaí could have with British police that would allow undercover agents to spy in the Republic without the Irish government being informed.

Policing Authority to question Nóirín O’Sullivan, the current commissioner, on whether the gardaí sanctioned and relied on undercover agents from Scotland Yard.

The report on Mark Kennedy, a former undercover British officer who is now at the centre of a UK inquiry, had been kept secret for six years on state security grounds. It has finally been released after *The Times* took the Department of Justice to the Information Commissioner for refusing to grant a freedom of information request to release it.

Its publication reveals that the gardaí defended having a relationship with international police forces that allowed spies to work here and defended keeping such arrangements a secret from the government.

Mr Kennedy posed as an environmental activist and joined groups under the name Mark Stone, an alias he used from 2003 to 2010. The Pitchford inquiry will publicly examine the practices of Mr Kennedy and others in his unit after it emerged that officers had been having sexual relationships with women they were spying on.

The inquiry will not scrutinise what agents may have done in other jurisdictions, including Ireland. The Irish government has not planned an inquiry into Mr Kennedy’s practices here.

After it emerged in 2011 that Mr Kennedy had been in Ireland, the government asked Mr Callinan for a report on Mr Kennedy's activities in Ireland. The report was never published. A request by *The Times* to access it under freedom of information law was refused. Last month the Information Commissioner ruled that the Department of Justice should release the document, which was given to this newspaper this week.

"I am aware of suggestions in the media that Mr Kennedy was here with the consent of An Garda Síochána and that there was a relationship between him and the gardaí," Mr Callinan wrote in the report on March 23, 2011. He did not deny that Mr Kennedy had been operating with the consent of the force but went on to tell ministers that it might be "helpful" to explain the background of using undercover agents from other jurisdictions.

"The use of such agents/police officers from other jurisdictions is a recognised and necessary tactic in the special circumstances where external activists with a track record of violence and whose identities are unknown to local police seek to shape and control violent protest actions," Mr Callinan wrote.

He claimed that the right of gardaí to enter into such arrangements was "vital" for national security interests and refused to tell the government if the national police force had a confidential arrangement with the Metropolitan Police allowing undercover British officers to work here.

A spokesman for Ms Fitzgerald said that she had sought a second report on undercover British police from Ms O'Sullivan but had not asked for clarification on whether Mr Kennedy had been working with Irish police.

"In seeking that report, the tánaiste did not seek to circumscribe in any way the information which the garda commissioner would provide. The tánaiste will fully consider

Lynn Boylan, the Sinn Féin MEP, said it was “essential” that the second report clarify who, if anyone, in the gardaí sanctioned Mr Kennedy’s presence.

“The minister for justice and the gardaí have deliberately tried to prevent information coming into the public domain on what they did and did not know about the activities of British police spies in Ireland,” she said. “I welcome the fact that the report from 2011 has finally been released but it is imperative that Ms Fitzgerald make public the supplementary report that she commissioned in October.”

Mr Kennedy had intimate relationships with women while undercover and joined protests against President Bush’s visit to Ireland for an EU-US summit in 2004 and the Shell to Sea campaign in Co Mayo in 2006. He also attended protests at Shannon airport over alleged extrajudicial rendition flights.

There has been widespread criticism of Scotland Yard’s decision to use undercover agents to spy on environmental activists. The Metropolitan Police formally apologised last year after revelations that officers had deceived women with whom they had sexual relationships.

An inquiry set up by Theresa May when she was home secretary is now examining cases of undercover officers in England and Wales but not trips by the same officers to Northern Ireland, Scotland or the Republic. The Scottish and Northern Irish police forces have both said that they had no knowledge of undercover Metropolitan Police officers being in their jurisdictions.

Mr Kennedy’s activities in Ireland were first highlighted in the Dáil by Michael D Higgins when he was a TD.

In a statement the Labour Party said: “Brendan Howlin, the Labour Party leader, reiterates his previous call for the tánaiste to give an account to the Dáil as to whether, in one of the most

Síochána sanctioned and relied on undercover agents from Scotland Yard. If the tánaiste can't give an adequate report about this to the Dáil and the public, the Labour Party believes the Policing Authority should pursue the matter.”

After her department refused to release the full report to *The Times* last year, Ms Fitzgerald attempted to summarise its contents in response to a parliamentary question from Sinn Féin.

In its ruling on the *Times* appeal against the Department of Justice, the Information Commissioner stated that Ms Fitzgerald's parliamentary question response had undermined her department's claim that releasing details of the report would undermine state security. The ruling also stated that the public interest in openness and transparency in relation to the department's governance of the gardaí outweighed any public interest served in keeping the report a secret.



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# Sex kills, anti-abortion clinic tells women

Ellen Coyne, Rebecca Lumley

April 3 2017, 12:01am, The Times



A clinic in Dublin claimed that continuing with a pregnancy could protect women against breast cancer



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Two unregulated crisis pregnancy agencies with connections to Irish pro-life groups have been caught giving misleading “advice” about the consequences of abortion, having sex and using contraception.

A new undercover investigation by *The Times* has secretly recorded counsellors at the Ask Majella crisis pregnancy agency claiming that abortion causes breast cancer and can increase a woman’s chances of losing all of her reproductive organs. They also said that contraception was dangerous and women could “die” from having sex.

A second undercover investigation at Gianna Care, a crisis pregnancy service that started as a Youth Defence activist

claimed to offer “the truth”.

Gianna Care and Ask Majella are unregulated crisis pregnancy agencies based in Dublin. Both have been exposed six months after *The Times* carried out an undercover investigation into another clinic, the Women’s Centre at 9 Berkeley Street in Dublin, which revealed it was telling women that abortion causes breast cancer and could turn them into child abusers.

At that time, Simon Harris, the health minister, pledged to crack down on such agencies but no new legislation has been introduced.

In a statement issued in response to the new cases, Mr Harris said: “Women who are experiencing a crisis pregnancy and are seeking support can be in great distress, and the health information they ask for should be just that, not an opportunity to mislead them”. The Department of Health said the minister had committed to a “sizeable and important body of work” on the issue.

In the latest exposé, an undercover reporter was told at the Ask Majella agency that terminating a pregnancy was the same as a mother pushing her child in front of a moving car, and that every time she saw a baby having had a termination she would feel like she was being stabbed. She was also told that an abortion would take away the “light” in her eyes.

Human Life International (Ireland), a religious anti-abortion campaign group, runs the Ask Majella crisis pregnancy agency.

Over the course of an hour-long appointment with a reporter posing as a pregnant 20-year-old woman last month, two counsellors at the Ask Majella service claimed that: abortion causes breast cancer and continuing with a pregnancy protects against breast cancer.

was dangerous. They claimed a crisis pregnancy was a “blessing” as it could lead to a woman reassessing the risks of contracting a fatal sexually transmitted infection from having sex. They also said abortion could cause the loss of reproductive organs and a double mastectomy and made the claim that terminating a pregnancy is the same as pushing a child in front of a moving car.

Ask Majella and Gianna Care have both said that they are separate agencies, although they hold appointments in the same office at 46a Dorset Street, Dublin. The address is the registered business address of Gianna Care, which was set up by Youth Defence volunteers. Youth Defence has said that it is a separate organisation to Gianna Care.

A spokeswoman for Ask Majella said the crisis pregnancy agency had been renting the room on a “professional and independent basis”.

Family & Life, another large anti-abortion campaign group which presented to the citizens’ assembly considering abortion law last month, has been funding Gianna Care.

American studies from the 1990s claimed to have shown an association between abortion and breast cancer. Larger and more recent studies have disproved any link. Ask Majella exaggerated the relationship between a woman’s slight reduction in exposure to hormones produced while pregnant and her chances of getting breast cancer.

Ask Majella has claimed to have talked 500 of the 2,000 women it counselled over the past 15 years into continuing pregnancies. The undercover reporter was given a badge which claimed to be the “exact size” of a foetus’ feet at ten weeks’ gestation, literature which detailed the size of the foetus at each week’s gestation and a prayer leaflet of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is the patron saint of the unborn. The agency directed the reporter to websites with graphic images of abortion.

also supports conversion “therapy” for gay people, a practice which believes that gay people can become heterosexual.

During the appointment, counsellors appeared to reference the previous investigation into The Women’s Centre by *The Times*.

The Times exposes more unregulated clinics

“We were being accused in our clinics of exaggerating the effects of abortion and giving negative, you know, saying and exaggerating how bad it is,” a counsellor said. “[The abortion industry] are the ones lying. Because they don’t want the truth to come out.” The counsellors suggested information linking abortion and breast cancer was being suppressed by the media.

In 2004, Ask Majella bought a €45,000 ultrasound scanner because it believes that if a woman looks at an sonographic picture of her foetus it will be harder for her to terminate the pregnancy. The tactic is adopted from American anti-abortion groups.

Counsellors tried to pressure the undercover reporter into having the scan. “It would confirm . . . in one sense you’d have to

Gianna Care uses a similar tactic and often gives women a picture of the scan on a USB stick to take away with them.

“We deal with girls from all walks of life, all different stages, all different backgrounds; there’s always the regret that they didn’t kept their baby, but there’s never the regret that they had their baby,” the Gianna Care counsellor said. “The other thing I always find as well which is true is that it’s not a lifetime condition, it’s not a diagnosis of cancer or something like that. It is a natural thing that your body is designed for. You know what I mean? So, in terms of, just looking at it from that point of view, it’s good news. It’s a good thing.”

Independent studies have consistently shown that the majority of women do not regret their abortion.

Both Gianna Care and Ask Majella use aggressive tactics to ensure they target women who are already considering terminating a pregnancy.

In 2014, Ask Majella reported in its annual returns that it was increasing spending on sponsored internet ads which ensured it was one of the first Google results for women seeking information on legal abortion services. “Google ads are live and huge increase in our crisis pregnancy calls,” it said. Previously, it had taken out full page advertisements in a number of regional phone books.

Youth Defence volunteers who held vigils outside a legitimate crisis pregnancy agency set up Gianna Care originally so that the group would have an office to take women it had approached outside a pro-choice agency.

*The Times* asked Youth Defence about its connections with Gianna Care. Youth Defence said this newspaper was being “belligerent” and “unprofessional”.

we do not provide pregnancy counselling services in Dorset Street,” a spokesperson said.

A solicitor wrote to *The Times* on behalf of Gianna Care and said the agency does not seek to “judge or provoke unnecessary anxiety.” He said the service was not connected to Youth Defence.

Last year, David Manly, a director at Family and Life, ran a campaign to raise €15,000 for Gianna Care in a “pro-life emergency” appeal. Writing in the Catholic publication *Alive!* in May 2016, Mr Manly said: “One of our major programmes assists women facing crisis pregnancies.”

Mr Manly told *The Times* that fundraising for Gianna Care was part of his organisation’s work to help women in crisis pregnancies, and if he had any evidence that it was a rogue agency his organisation would not work with it. He said it had no relationship with Ask Majella. “Lying to anyone is unjustified, especially in the case at issue,” he said.

Patrick McCrystal, the executive director at Human Life International (Ireland), said it was the responsibility of every baptised Catholic to “rescue those unjustly sentenced to death”. He claimed his organisation was telling the truth and the media was lying about abortion. “It is a sin to lie to these women, many of whom are in a fearful, vulnerable state,” he said.



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