

# Nuns who owe millions in abuse reparations given hospital

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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!