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Roscommon people

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BIG PLANS IN BALLYGAR
PAGES 44 - 50



The Hand of FOD!

Roscommon manager Fergal O'Donnell has named an unchanged team (see page 64) for Sunday's All-Ireland Football quarter-final with Cork at Croke Park. There was a slight doubt about the fitness of Geoffrey Claffey but he will have recovered in plenty of time for the big game. Senan Kilbride is back training with the team after recovering from his injury but he is not named in the panel of 30.

There is huge interest in the game

around the county and a Roscommon GAA county board official told *Roscommon People* on Tuesday that there were long queues of people to purchase tickets all day on Tuesday and again on Wednesday. Tickets will be on sale until 8 pm on Thursday night at the county board offices in Roscommon town. We have a special pull-out sports supplement inside this week's *Roscommon People* (pages 23-42) with news, views and interviews on the big game. — S.D.

Fears mount for future of A&E

■ Pauline Scott

Fears are mounting this week for the future of the 24-hour accident and emergency department at Roscommon County Hospital, following comments made at the weekend by the outgoing CEO of the HSE, Professor Brendan Drumm.

Speaking at the weekend, Professor Drumm stated that further changes are needed to health services and pointed to the fact that there are four hospitals offering 24-hour A&E services in counties Roscommon and Galway.

Reacting to these comments, Deputy Denis Naughten described the comments as "the latest proof of the HSE's intention to downgrade Roscommon County Hospital." He added, "Professor Drumm may believe keeping our hospital open 24 hours a day cannot be justified, but maybe he should try

telling that to the people whose lives have been saved by the very existence of the hospital."

Hospital Action Committee councillors, speaking at Monday's meeting of the council, echoed the concerns. Cllr. Paula McNamara said, speaking of Prof. Drumm's comments, "He said very clearly that there were too many hospitals in counties Roscommon and Galway and that statement is very self-explanatory as far as I'm concerned."

Cllr. Valerie Byrne pointed out that 20 nurses at Roscommon County Hospital have not been replaced and said that the cuts in the HSE are all happening in the top rather than the bottom. However, Cllr. Paddy Kilduff was defiant, stating, "It is as simple as this, Roscommon County Hospital will not be closing and I know what I'm talking about."

See page 22.

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