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Health Service Trolley dysfunctionality is spreading to other sectors!

Last week's news that homeless families were being directed to Garda Stations to be "accommodated" is yet another disappointing marker of the Irish state's inability to manage vulnerable people appropriately. It is a further example of facilities intended for one purpose being systematically misused, thus risking that the primary function of the facility / service is not delivered to the required standard.

The daily reality for most Emergency Departments (EDs) is that they are expected to function both as an Emergency Department (their designated function) but also as an inpatient ward. The result of being expected to be warehouses for admitted inpatients is that EDs commonly are unable to treat those who require emergency intervention in an appropriate and timely way with significant risks to patients. Similarly, it is difficult to see how accommodation intended for those in custody is an appropriate location for homeless families and, equally, how having cells used inappropriately in this way doesn't deprive An Garda Síochána of at least some of its capacity to deal adequately with crime or at the very least ensure that those who need to be processed by the Criminal Justice System have this done efficiently.

For how long more will it be acceptable in our government's eyes that the underlying major capacity deficits remain unaddressed and instead the state resorts to commandeering facilities intended for one purpose in an attempt to address a completely different issue, to the detriment of the public?

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