

Religious congregation in fight to withdraw cash from fund set up for Michael Shine victims

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A religious congregation is attempting to withdraw cash from a fund that was set up to pay for legal battles with the victims of pervert surgeon Michael Shine.

It has emerged the State is fighting efforts by the Medical Missionaries of Mary to withdraw some of the cash from the fund.

The MMM previously employed notorious paedophile Shine who abused dozens of boys and young men at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda, Co Louth. The organisation paid €1.6million into a fund in 1997 to shield the State from costs arising from the abuse if any litigation arose.

Back then the ownership of the hospital was being transferred to the Eastern Health Board but allegations had already been made against Shine which gardai had probed. The cash was as part of an agreement between the religious organisation and the Minister for Health that it would indemnify the State against claims arising out of or in connection with potential liability in respect of possible claims of alleged abuse.

It is believed that many of the cases taken by Shine's victims were resolved after payments were made by insurers, or from another fund set up by the MMM. The congregation is now trying to retrieve some of the cash and it is understood an independent expert has been appointed to help resolve the issue.

It is also understood the fund set up by the congregation was never used by the State to fund any payments.

Disgraced surgeon Shine was jailed for four years for abusing boys while the High Court revealed more than 110 actions against him had been settled.

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this article, you can contact Dignity4Patients, whose helpline is open Monday to Thursday 10am to 4pm.