



18<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Deputy John Curran, TD  
Dáil Eireann  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2.

**PQ: 28986/19**

To ask the Minister for Health the way in which he is increasing the range of wrap-around community and drug and alcohol taskforces residential services equipped to meet the needs of women using drugs and or alcohol in a harmful manner, including those with children and those that are pregnant

Dear Deputy Curran,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

As the Deputy is aware, in terms of community based wrap around services for women, including those with children and those that are pregnant, the specialist Drug Liaison Midwife service liaises between the three Dublin Maternity hospitals and the Drug Treatment Services. The experience of this specialist liaison service indicates that it is possible to build effective working relationships between opioid dependent pregnant women and the Obstetric and Drug services involved in their care. An expansion of this service has been planned for CHO 3 and CHO 4. Both posts involving a specialised drug and alcohol liaison midwife are being progressed through the National Recruitment Service. It is hoped that the campaigns may be initiated in August. A next phase of expansion is planned for CHOs 2 and 5 and funding has just recently been released to initiate the recruitment process in both areas.

In addition to providing supports to women in terms of the National Drugs Rehabilitation Framework Case Management process across community, voluntary and statutory services nationally, drug and alcohol service staff have trained in Meitheal processes which seek to provide a structured response from various identified agencies to meet the needs of parents and children who may be at risk or vulnerable. The Hidden Harm strategy is an important element of recognising and responding to the needs of children, young people and parents where there is drug and alcohol use in the home. In addition, addiction services support parenting programmes such as Strengthening Families, Parenting under Pressure (PuP) in the community, and M-PACT (Moving Parents and Children Together).

In terms of residential services, where the need arises, pregnant women are prioritized for stabilisation in the inpatient residential units in Cuan Dara and Beaumont. Coolmine Ashleigh House is the national residential Therapeutic Community for women, expectant women and



mothers with young children. An expansion of this residential model will be considered in the estimates process for 2020.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph Doyle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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Joseph Doyle  
National Planning Specialist