



6th June 2019

**Deputy Louise O'Reilly,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.**

PQ 22935/19- To ask the Minister for Health if the audiologist working with the HSE to screen and monitor persons with hearing impairments in counties Westmeath, Roscommon, Laois and Offaly is no longer employed by the HSE; the length of time the position of audiologist been vacant; his plans to rectify the situation; the number of patients seeking screening and monitoring that had their appointments cancelled or postponed as a result of there being no audiologist available to provide this service in the counties in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 22936/19- To ask the Minister for Health his plans to address concerns of parents with children with hearing impairments in counties Westmeath, Roscommon, Laois and Offaly that have had their screening and monitoring appointments cancelled due to the fact the audiologist employed by the HSE to provide this service in the counties is no longer employed by the HSE; and the measures being put in place to ensure children are regularly monitored by a hearing specialist

-Louise O'Reilly

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

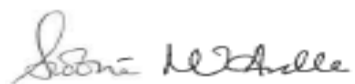
The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

There are two sound proofed Audiology rooms in Clonbrusk Primary Care Centre in Athlone. One room is for adult services and one room for children's services. This facility services the Westmeath population in CHO 8 and currently there is one adult clinic each week and one child clinic each fortnight. The facility is also used by the Roscommon Audiology services in CHO 2 who use it 3 to 4 times each month, while awaiting the filling of CHO8 posts.

The Pediatric Audiologist left the service on 31st March 2019 and Community Services have explored every avenue to get an interim replacement. CV's have been requested from two Locum Agencies in Ireland and two locum agencies in the UK however no suitable candidates came forward from this exercise. Private Audiologists have also been offered sessional work but no private audiologists have taken up the offer. There are currently 3 vacant positions approved for filling, one Staff Grade Post has been offered out to a number of candidates however no one has accepted the post and the two senior posts are with the National Recruitment Service for advertisement both nationally and internationally. Every effort is being made to secure the services of Audiologists to provide Audiology services in the Midlands.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Siobhán McArdle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Siobhán McArdle,
Head of Operations Primary Care,
Community Operations