



Children's Health Ireland

Stáinte Leanaí Éireann (SLÉ), Herberton, Siúlán San Séamas, Rialto, D08 HP97, Éire
Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Herberton, St James's Walk, Rialto, D08 HP97, Ireland

15th December 2020

Deputy Michael Noonan,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 42628/20

"To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the lengthy waiting lists for children with Down's arthropathy to see paediatric rheumatologists, either privately or publicly; the outcome of a meeting held on 18 December 2019 between the rheumatology department of Crumlin Children's Hospital and an organisation (details supplied) on this issue; and if he will make a statement on the matter".

Details: Down's Syndrome Ireland

Dear Deputy Noonan,

I refer to your parliamentary question above to which I have been asked to provide a response.

Children's Health Ireland (CHI) sincerely regrets that children and their families are experiencing long waiting times for their Rheumatology and MRI appointments. We recognize that too many children are waiting too long for their appointments and we are making every effort to reduce these waiting times.

During the initial phases of COVID-19, all face to face hospital outpatient reviews and most of the planned diagnostic tests, including MRI, were deferred in response to the pandemic. CHI at Crumlin has recommenced the vast majority of outpatient and diagnostic services, albeit at reduced numbers, due to public health guidelines on social distancing.

CHI advise a meeting was held with the Rheumatology Team and hospital representatives along with a number of advocacy groups in December 2019 to include Down Syndrome Ireland, Arthritis Ireland and the Irish Children's Arthritis Network. An information leaflet has gone through a number of iterations and has been compiled with the assistance of UCD and is going through the final phase of graphic design and branding. CHI apologises for the delay with this and confirm it is our intention to publish this information leaflet shortly once the final version has been agreed.

There is an active recruitment campaign for an additional Rheumatology Consultant underway closing on December 11th 2020 following an earlier campaign in 2020 that did not result in the recruitment of the third Consultant Rheumatologist. It is anticipated that a suitable candidate can be recruited into this role as part of the wider Rheumatology Team.

Mission – To promote and provide child-centered, research-led and learning informed healthcare, to the highest standards of safety and excellence. We do this in partnership with each other, with children, young people and their families through a network of children's services in Ireland.

CRA Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20202295 Revenue Charitable Status CHY: 22235

Board Members: Prof James Browne (Chairman), Prof Niamh Brennan, Mr Con Cronin, Ms Mary Cryan, Mr Liam Dowdall, Prof Martin Elliott, Ms Catherine Guy, Dr Anne Kilgallen, Dr Gavin Lavery, Ms Brigid McManus, Mr Turlough O'Sullivan, Mr Sean Sheehan



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This addition to the Medical staff will allow for an increased number of patients to be seen, diagnosed and treatment initiated as part of the comprehensive rheumatology service.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Gannon
Chief Operations Officer
Children's Health Ireland
Email: joe.gannon@nchg.ie

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