



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

National Office for Public  
Health/ChildHealth  
Strategic Planning &  
Transformation,  
Health Service Executive,  
Public Health Department,  
Second Floor,  
Mount Kennett House,  
Henry Street,  
Limerick

Post Code V94KN3N

Tel: (061) 483347

Fax: (061) 464205

Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

5<sup>th</sup>. August 2020

Deputy David Cullinane  
TD  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 1

**PQ17849/20: To ask the Minister for Health the funding allocated to resourcing and developing a universal child health and well-being service since the adoption of Sláintecare; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The above PQ has been sent to my office to respond directly to you on same.

There were 59,796 babies born in Ireland in 2019 (CS0). Each child born is entitled to receive at least 22 contacts with health service as provided within the framework of the National Healthy Childhood Programme.

The child health programme is universal and is based on a principle of progressive universalism, described as '*help for all and extra help for those who need it most*'.

. The key components of the programme include:

- Screening
- Child Health Reviews/surveillance
- Immunisations

The child health service is provided by a wide range of professionals from pregnancy to the first year in second level school:

- Maternity and midwifery services and GPs provide pregnancy and post-natal care (including two checks for the baby at two and six weeks) as part of the Maternity and Infant Scheme.
- GPs deliver the primary immunisation programme (up to 13 months) and monitor growth at two and five years as part of the Under 6's GP Contract. There is free GP care to all children under the age of six years.
- Public Health Nurses and Community Doctors deliver child health screening, developmental surveillance, key health messages and support to parents in addition to vaccinations to children from birth to first year in second level school (school vaccinations).

While the Slaintecare Report 2017 included specific recommendations on development of a dedicated child health workforce and made specific reference to public health nursing, the current service continues to be provided as part of a more generalist PHN role.

Over the past 5 years the national child health programme has been reviewed and updated in line with best practice and emerging evidence. Implementation of the updated programme has been supported by Philanthropic seed funding (through the Nurture Programme – Infant Health and Wellbeing), enhancing the universal service through a range of initiatives including capacity building within the existing workforce, new information and supports using new technology to support dissemination of information to parents (Mychild.ie).

The Slaintecare Integration Fund in 2019 has approved a grant of €0.6m to build further on this work, creating a personalised digital information journey for expectant and new parents.

Over the period 2018 to 2020, additional budget of €8.5m was allocated to the HSE to fund the expansion of the Primary Childhood and Schools Immunisation Programme. The €8.5 is comprised of €4.4m for HPV and €4.1m for Rotavirus and Men B.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelleher', with a horizontal line underneath.

**DR. KEVIN KELLEHER, FFPHM, FFPHMI**  
**ASSISTANT NATIONAL DIRECTOR –PUBLIC HEALTH/CHILD HEALTH**  
**OFFICE OF CHIEF CLINICAL OFFICER**  
**Medical registration number 19719**