

2nd Arpil 2020

Deputy Aindrais Moynihan
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ 3021/20

“To ask the Minister for Health the status of the reconfiguration of services to children with autism in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

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

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare area will re-configure Childrens’ Disability Services in 2020 in the Cork area with the roll out of the National Programme for Progressing Disabilities Services (PDS) for Children. Services in Kerry and in West Cork have already re-configured and are now structured according to the PDS model. Cork North and Cork North Lee and South Lee will re-configure in the months ahead. There will be 14 Children’s Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) across Cork Kerry Community Healthcare once the reconfiguration is complete. Following a WRC Labour Court ruling the appointment of the Childrens Disability Network Managers will progress in early 2020, the appointment of these managers is a key enabler for the progression of the reconfiguration of the teams and the HSE has projected to roll out reconfiguration by year end 2020.

The HSE are working with our Partner Section 38 and 39 organisations to implement the ‘Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme (PDS). The key objective of PDS is to provide equity of access to all children with complex needs based on their individual need, regardless of their diagnosis, where they live or go to school. This means that a child will have the same access to services whether they live in Donegal, Dublin or Dingle. PDS is doing this by forming partnerships between all the disability organisations in an area and pooling their staff with expertise in the different types of disabilities to form local Children’s Disability Network Teams (CDNTs). Children with non-complex needs will have their needs met by their local Primary Care services (e.g. public health nurse, community speech and language therapist, family doctor, community physiotherapist etc.) In an example of two children with autism, one child may manage well with some occasional supports from Primary Care while the other child may have significant needs and require a team of professionals working together within an interdisciplinary team to support his/her needs. The National Access Policy for Children with Development Delay and Disability is being implemented which will signpost referrers, including parents, to the appropriate service i.e. the local CDNT or Primary Care service. The integrated Childrens’ Services Forum which includes representatives from Disability Services, Primary Care, and Childrens and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) will ensure that all children requiring a service will have access to the most appropriate

service.

There are 56 teams already established under this programme across the country and a remaining 82 to be set up in the coming year, 10 of these will be based in the areas in Cork that have not yet re-configured as outlined above. It is important to note that where these teams are already in place, services are more stream-lined.

I trust this clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Deborah Harrington,
General Manager Disability Services Cork North,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare.

