



8th October 2020

Ms. Louise O'Reilly TD
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Head of Service Mental Health,
HSE Community Healthcare Organisation
Dublin North City & County,
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Re: PQ 25788/20 To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the situation facing HSE workers in the Dublin North Mental Health Services that are now facing large pay deductions due to a payroll error by the HSE; and the reason the HSE and Dublin North Mental Health Services are continuing to refuse to engage with the workers and their trade unions in order to come up with a payment plan to ensure that the return of the overpaid monies is done in a fair and affordable way and that does not create significant financial difficulties for the workers concerned.

Dear Deputy,

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

I wish to advise that due to a clerical error North Dublin Mental Health Services Health Care Assistant staff were placed on the incorrect point of the salary scale arising from a Labour Court job evaluation process. This resulted in an overpayment being made to sixty staff on 25th June 2020 for the period from 1st September 2019 to 14th June 2020. HSE Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (DNCC) is aware of this overpayment and would like to apologise to staff affected. The management are in communication with all those impacted.

The payroll overpayment has been managed in line with HSE Financial Regulations and having regard to the Revenue Commissioner guidelines. On discovery of the overpayment all staff and their union representative were immediately contacted by North Dublin Mental Health Services Payroll staff. The gross and net amounts overpaid were confirmed to staff and they were provided with two repayment options i.e. a once off deduction or scheduled repayments over ten pay dates to 10th December 2020. North Dublin Mental Health Services had ongoing engagement with staff and the union representatives in relation to this matter, with meetings held with the latter on 28th July and 14th August 2020. Payroll deductions commenced on 20th August 2020.

A small number of staff have indicated the repayment schedule over 10 pay dates is too onerous. Community Health Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHODNCC) is willing to consider an extended payment period and in this regard a representative from senior nursing management met with them on 28th August 2020 to discuss their individual financial circumstances. The responses to these requests will be considered in line with the HSE's National Financial Regulations and the individuals concerned will be contacted in relation to the outcome as soon as possible.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Walsh
Head of Service Mental Health