



Mr. Alan Farrell, TD  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

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**PQ ref 59878/21 –**

To ask the Minister for Health when the children's disability services in north County Dublin will be offering appointment to children on their waiting list; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Farrell,

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

The Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT) were established in Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO DNCC) on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021. It is a very significant reform programme under Progressing Disability Service (PDS) which focuses on outcomes for children and families rather than inputs. An inter-disciplinary team will work with each family to develop an Individual Family Service Plan and support children and parents to reach goals identified on the plan. The focus is not on the number of sessions of therapies like speech and language or occupational therapy received but on the goals that children and families may meaningfully aim to achieve and steps they may take together with the Children's Disability Network Team.

All children who were open or waitlisted for a Children's Disability Service were transferred to their local Children's Disability Network Team. The first priority for the new team has been to safely transition the open caseload to the new team and to ensure that effective care pathways are in place for all of these children.

There are 12 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) in CHO DNCC managed by three Lead Agencies and ourselves and that is broken down as follows:

- St Michael's House Services - 4 teams
- Avista, formerly Daughters of Charity Disability Support Services (DOCDSS) – 3 teams
- Central Remedial Clinic – 3 teams
- HSE - 2 teams.

All CDNTs were developed through reconfiguration of existing resources and recruitment is underway for additional staff funded through new development posts for 2021/2022 across all networks. The CDNTs will also be aligned to the 12 Community Healthcare Networks currently under development across Primary Care Services in CHO DNCC to ensure and promote access and integration for service users. Recruitment to vacant posts is and will remain an active priority among all disability services providers. The three Lead Agencies referred to above, who are commissioned to deliver children's disability services with the HSE, have prioritised



workforce planning to ensure equitable distribution of staffing resources which are finite. Each Lead Agency for the relevant networks is actively working on recruitment initiatives to fill the existing vacancies and new development posts in each CDNT.

I can also confirm that it is the intention of HSE CHO DNCC to continue to work closely with the CEOs and management team of all Lead Agencies to ensure that significant progress is made on responding to waiting lists in the next 12-month period.

I am very sorry about the delay and frustration some children and families may experience and I assure you we will continue to work towards improved access to timely services for children and families including developing webinars, group based workshops and information sessions for children and families and development of a repository of resources for children and their families to promote and enable wellbeing at home.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Olive Hanley', is positioned below the closing. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

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**Ms Olive Hanley**  
**Head of Service for Disability**