



6th April 2021

Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 15598/21 – “To ask the Minister for Health the changes to and impact on the provision of on-site therapeutic services to the children and young persons attending services (details supplied) generally and the pupils of a school in particular in the rolling out of the new HSE progressing disability services; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Richard Boyd Barrett

Details provided: Carmona Services - Carmona School (located: St John of God Carmona Services, Glenageary, Co Dublin

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

Thank you for your recent correspondence. The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the current position.

Community Healthcare East are in the final stages of implementing the Progressing Disability Services (PDS) for Children and Young People Programme which requires a reconfiguration of both HSE and HSE funded voluntary organisations for children’s disability services, into geographically based Children’s Disability Networks, providing services for children aged from birth to 18.

This programme aims to achieve equitable access to services and supports for all children, based on their individual need and not diagnosis, where they live or where they go to school.

The objectives of PDS are to:

- Provide a clear pathway and fair access to services for all children with a disability.
- Make the best use of available resources for the benefit of all children and their families.
- Ensure effective teams working in partnership with families and with education staff to support children with a disability to reach their full potential.

The Children’s Disability Network Teams (CDNT) will comprise of staff from existing disability service providers so their current experience will be still on the team and will provide an upskilling for other team members in conditions which are particularly complex. It is recognised that children with a complex presentation have needs that require to be met across a number of different areas of life within their home/school/community. The location in which intervention is provided will vary according to the child’s needs at a particular stage in their life. All children/families will have an individual family plan which will outline how the goals for the coming period will be achieved and where. If a child’s needs are best met in a particular location that will be acknowledged by the team.

The new Children's Disability Network Teams will be reconfigured at the end of June 2021. The new team will be in contact with families following this date to discuss Individual Family Service Plan's which will identify the child's needs and where future services will be delivered to best meet the child's needs. They may be with the school, home or community.

In relation to special schools there has been significant engagement and communication in relation to PDS. For the special schools that have clinical staff reconfiguring into the children Disability Network Teams. In addition to the ongoing standard communication and updates:

- A success webinar for the principals was held by the Children Disability Network Managers on the 25th March'21 (attached the presentation which outlines the CDNT aligned to the Schools). From this webinar a Frequently Asked Questions was developed.
- Individual Working Groups have been established with the schools to develop transition arrangements and plans to support the full reconfiguration by the 30th June 2021.

I trust that this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Patricia McEvoy
Head of Service, Disabilities