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12th November 2021

Deputy David Cullinane,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 52180/21 – To ask the Minister for Health the number of alleged abuse cases submitted by disability and older persons services for review by a HSE safeguarding and protection team which have yet to be examined by CHO in tabular form; the date on which the oldest of such cases was referred for review; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 52181/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of safeguarding plans which have yet to be reviewed by HSE safeguarding and protection teams by CHO in tabular form; the date on which the oldest of such plans was received; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

-David Cullinane

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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

Concerns of abuse of residents in disability or older persons service are managed under the HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy, 2014 which is the framework for undertaking screening, assessment and drawing up of safeguarding plans. Safeguarding preliminary screenings are submitted by designated officers within these residential settings to the HSE safeguarding and Protection teams in the relevant Community Health Care Area for oversight. Where there is an outcome of reasonable grounds or further information required, each service would also submit a safeguarding plan which is then also oversight reviewed by the HSE Safeguarding Team.

The safeguarding plans are considered on a triage priority basis and currently one Safeguarding Team in CHO 7 has a backlog of safeguarding plans for review. The number of safeguarding preliminary screenings submitted by disability and older persons services for review by a HSE safeguarding and protection team which have yet to be examined in CHO 7 is 499. The date on which the oldest of such cases was referred for review is the 06/03/2020.

The service is currently working to address the backlog which developed in CHO7 and additional resource has been allocated to assist with this. In addition, current concerns are being processed in a timely manner with work on the backlog happening simultaneously.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne O'Neill', written over a thin horizontal line.

Yvonne O'Neill
National Director
Community Operations