



National Director, Community Operations  
Dr. Steevens Hospital, Dublin 8, DO8 W2A8  
Tel: 01 6352596 Email: communityoperations@hse.ie

Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta, Oibríochtaí Pobail  
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens' Baile Atha Cliath 8, DO8 W2A8  
T 01 6352596 R: communityoperations@hse.ie

4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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

**PQ 52182/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of residents in HSE disability or older persons services who are known to be abusive or potentially abusive, including but not limited to sexual abuse, who are still resident in community settings and not confined for the protection of residents, such as occurred in a case (details supplied); the protections in place for each setting by CHO in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**-David Cullinane**

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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.

Where concerns of abuse for residents in disability or older persons service are raised, the HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy, 2014 is the framework for undertaking screening, assessment and drawing up of safeguarding plans. Data is collected on the numbers of safeguarding cases raised within services and numbers that have outcomes of reasonable grounds. It is important to clarify that the finding of reasonable grounds is pertaining to the risk of abuse and does reference an outcome of an individualised risk assessment on a person of alleged concern.

Each individual case with reasonable grounds is unique and the nature of the protection plan is specific to the needs and protection of that individual adult. Depending on the context, nature and extent of the assessed risks the protection plan would set out the actions to address the protection needs of the adult deemed at risk of abuse designed to reduce, minimise or eliminate a risk of abuse. Such protection plans can include amendments to the person's overall care and placement arrangements. All risk considerations are evaluated in safeguarding planning including any current risks that may be posed by a person of alleged concern as well as compatibility with other residents. A key consideration in any planning is also the will and preference of the adult with regard to any proposed changes in their care or placement arrangements. Due to the sensitive, individualised and evolving nature of such plans it would be inappropriate to collect information over time on the number or place of residence of any person who may be a source of alleged concern following outcomes of reasonable grounds.

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 horizontal line.

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Yvonne O'Neill,  
National Director,  
Community Operations