



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Head of Service - Disability Service Office
South East Community Healthcare
Health Service Executive
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24th November 2021

Mr. Martin Browne T.D.
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 55026/21

To ask the Minister for Health if there are capacity issues for services that provide respite services for children such as a service (Northfield Respite Services in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary); the options open to families who find themselves in situations in which respite services are needed but are full to capacity resulting in significant waiting lists; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Browne,

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

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

Northfields Respite Services deliver respite in line with a Service Level Arrangement with the HSE for a quantified number of openings per year. Additional openings are subject to annual fluctuations in additional respite funding and are agreed with Northfields on the basis of their capacity from a staffing perspective to provide this service. Occasionally there is also a requirement for emergency responses and again this is dependent on the availability of staffing to respond.

The onset of COVID-19 has impacted the ability of Northfields to respond to Service Users, however progress has recently been achieved in processing a number of the referrals on the waiting list for the service.

Some families with urgent need may be able to avail of outreach supports from alternative home support providers such as Bluebird Care. SECH Disability Services are attempting to work with service providers to grow and develop community based Respite Services to address the current significant need and demand for such a service. SECH Disability Services have also prepared business cases for increased respite services and these were submitted as part of the HSE National Estimates process for next year. Submissions for increased respite will also be included in the National Service and Operational plans for 2022.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anne Ennis', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ms. Anne Ennis
Head of Service, Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare