

8th October, 2021

Ms. Holly Cairns, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 49063/21

“To ask the Minister for Health if he will to address the staffing deficits of over 168.91 whole-time equivalent HSCP posts that exist across the children disability network teams in CHO4 when comparing current staffing levels and caseload figures against the HSE minimal staffing requirements for HSCPs as set out in chapter 9: Health Services for Children in Ireland, a Guide to Workforce Planning of the HSE Policy Document A National Model of Care for Paediatric Healthcare Services in Ireland”.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) reconfigured children’s disability services to Childrens Disability Network Teams under the Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme (PDS) in April 2021. PDS is a significant change programme for the provision of services and supports for children from birth to 18 years of age, in line with Sláintecare and the Programme for Government, in order to:

- Provide a clear pathway and fairer 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 are working in partnership with families and with education staff to support children with a disability to reach their full potential.

PDS aligns with two clear objectives of The Sláintecare Report to:

- Provide the majority of care at or as close to home as possible
- Create an integrated system of care with healthcare professionals working closely together.

Children’s Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) have been established to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area. CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work and others. The team work closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child’s and family’s own priorities. Every child with complex needs arising from a disability will have access to a team, regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend.

In CKCH there are over 270 whole time equivalent HSCP and administrative staff assigned

to the 14 Childrens Disability Network Teams. These posts were reconfigured from previous children's disability posts from across the HSE and Section 38 and 39 voluntary agencies.

As part of the HSE National Service Plan 2021, a total of 100 development posts were allocated for PDS and its implementation. Under Phase 1 and Phase 2 CKCH received 7.5 wte posts with an additional 5.8 posts under Minister Rabittes Special School allocation. This totals an uplift of 13.3 posts over 2021.

HSE National Disability Office is undertaking a national CDNT workforce planning process commencing with a CDNT staff census. This will allow for a meaningful allocation of new development posts in the HSE National Service Plan 2022, based on current staffing levels and population needs data.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely



Ms. Majella Daly,
Head of Disability Services,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare

