



22nd February 2022

Mr Alan Farrell, TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Email: alan.farrell@oireachtas.ie

PQ ref 5919/22 To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown of the 12 roles unfulfilled within the children's disability network team in Balbriggan, County Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter.
Alan Farrell TD

Dear Deputy Farrell,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you with information in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Current posts unfilled following the recruitment process on the Balbriggan Children's Disability Network Team

Physiotherapy	1 staff grade WTE
Occupational Therapy	3 staff grade WTE
Speech & Language Therapy	0.9 senior WTE 1 staff grade WTE
Social work	2 staff grade WTE
Psychology	1 senior WTE 1 staff grade WTE
Home support	1 WTE
Dietitian	0.5 senior WTE

Vacant posts as a result of current or future maternity leave

Senior Occupational Therapy	1 WTE
Senior Psychology	1 WTE
Senior Physio	1 WTE (From March 2022)
Senior Occupational Therapy	1 WTE (From May 2022)

All disability services within Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County are experiencing significant recruitment challenges on Children's Disability Network Teams. Since reconfiguration in September 2021, there are on average 75 vacancies across the 12 teams and certain Networks such as Balbriggan, Blanchardstown, Blakestown and Swords are more impacted by these vacancies. These are also the Networks with high rate of referrals and waiting lists. We have established a Recruitment and Retention working group, chaired by our Head of Human Resources with the Lead Agencies responsible for the delivery of Children's Disability Network Services (Avista, St. Michael's House, and Central Remedial Clinical) to support the CEO's of the responsible Lead Agencies to explore recruitment initiatives, including international recruitment.



Concurrently our Head of Service Disability Olive Hanley chairs a CHO DNCC Governance Group overseeing CDNTs, and this group is exploring if there are any alternative staff grades or qualifications which may assist staff in CDNTs whilst they navigate the significant change within service delivery. We have also increased the level of administrative support to these teams to ensure that our qualified therapists are doing work appropriate to their qualifications rather than administrative tasks. The teams are experiencing high levels of maternity leave as the team demographic largely consists of young female Health and Social Care Professionals in this area. In this regard and in an effort to mitigate the risk, Ms Hanley has agreed with the CEOs of the Lead Agencies to approve the backfill of maternity leave which is not resourced within the allocated budget and Inter Agency Agreement for delivery of children's services in CDNTs.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jillian Connolly', is written over a horizontal line.

Ms Jillian Connolly
Acting Head of Service for Disability