



Cúram Sláinte
Phobail, Iarthar
ag freastal ar Ghailimh,
Maigheo agus Ros Comáin

Community
Healthcare West
serving Galway, Mayo
and Roscommon

Oifig an Bhainisteora Ginearálta
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais
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An Sean Ionad Sláinte, Sráid an Bhiocáire, Tuaim, Co. na
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23rd February 2022

Mairead Farrell TD
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Office of the General Manager
Disability Social Care
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PQ 7190/22

"To ask the Minister for Health the reason for the scarcity of appointments in early intervention services in respect to speech and language, psychology, dietician and occupational therapies in Connemara; the status of the commitment in the Programme for Government to further expand early intervention teams in schools over the next five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter."

Dear Deputy Farrell

I refer to PQ 7190/22 uploaded on the PAD System on the 8th February 2022 and due for response on the 23rd February 2022 regarding representations that you have made to the Minister for Health concerning "the reason for the scarcity of appointments in early intervention services in respect to speech and language, psychology, dietician and occupational therapies in Connemara; the status of the commitment in the Programme for Government to further expand early intervention teams in schools over the next five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter." The HSE has been requested to reply directly to you on this matter. The following response outlines the position.

I wish to advise that Community Healthcare West (CHW) has entered the reconfiguration phase and there has been an acceleration in the process of implementing Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (PDS CYP), with the appointment of 9 Children's Disability Network Managers (CDNMs). Over 200 staff are currently being configured into 9 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) across CHW. Seven of these teams are HSE led with Enable Ireland and the Brothers of Charity Galway leading the other two teams.

The PDS Programme will change the way services are provided across the country. In line with PDS policy, reconfiguring will include delivering services based on where children and young people live and through family centred practice. Services are planned to be delivered through a range of provisions and options, such as 1:1 input, group based intervention and universal strategies. The provision of these options will be discussed and planned for each family through an Individual Family Service Plan. This Plan will be developed and agreed between the family and the service, which will include where or how services and input is provided. For all children, the focus is on supporting every child to participate in their family, school and community life and the PDS model is to focus on supporting the family to use strategies and guidance from the team.

CDNT 4 covers Connemara and I have been advised by the Children's Disability Manager for Network 4 that the team is well into the process of the safe transition of children's care and information from the old service providers to their new teams. The team is currently working with children in crisis situations and children who have an upcoming transition e.g. ageing out of the services this year or starting school in Sept 2022. There is ongoing profiling of the new caseload to support allocation of resources according to the needs of the children. This is taking some time as a number of children have been on long wait-lists and a large number of these families need to be contacted so there is accurate up-to-date information on the current needs of the children. The new team are also meeting and planning for the provision of clinic consultation days, parent coaching and

training sessions (Universal and Targeted supports) for 2022. Regrettably, there are significant therapy staff vacancies in CDNT4 which are at varying stages of recruitment and every effort is being made to backfill with Agency staff where possible.

There are waiting lists for each discipline across each network and this will become clearer when reconfiguration is complete. CHW continues to carry out assessments and intervention with children. Whilst every effort is being made to minimise the disruption to children and families, there will inevitably be some impact. To offset this disruption, CHW are recruiting staff across all disciplines for a waiting list initiative to address waiting times in Children's Disability Network Teams.

I trust that this response has clarified the matters that you have raised in this instance.

Yours sincerely

pp Maura Monaghan

Dr Aoife O'Donohue
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