



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,
Disability Services/Social Care Division,
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19th July 2022

Deputy David Cullinane,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 35398/22

To ask the Minister for Health the reporting mechanism in place between the HSE and an organisation (details supplied) to ensure that assessments of need outsourced to the organisation are carried out in a timely fashion.

PQ: 35397/22

To ask the Minister for Health the quality assurances or checks that are in place to ensure compliance with agreements which may be in place between the HSE and a company (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 35396/22

To ask the Minister for Health the methodology used by a company (details supplied) in carrying out assessments of need on children outsourced by the HSE; if there is any difference between the operating procedure carried out by the company in comparison with the HSE; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 35395/22

To ask the Minister for Health the average cost of an assessment of need for a child with a disability carried out by the HSE; the average cost of an assessment carried out by a company (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 35394/22

To ask the Minister for Health if the HSE has agreed terms with a company (details supplied) for outsourcing assessments of need per child; if so, the costs per child; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ: 35393/22

To ask the Minister for Health the details of any contracts in place between the HSE and a company (details supplied); the nature and scope of any contract; the terms associated with each contract; and if he will make a statement on the matter.



PQ: 35383/22

To ask the Minister for Health the total cost to date for all children referred to an organisation (details supplied) for an assessment broken down by month and number of children referred; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: TTM Healthcare

HSE Response

TTM (Talk To Me) Healthcare Limited is part of TTM Group that also includes Resilience Limited, Just Specialist Recruitment Limited, TTM Healthcare Deutschland GMBH and TTM Healthcare Poland SP.

It is a private for profit organisation providing recruitment services and agency staff. On occasion their services are utilised to secure staff for HSE teams. TTM Group provides Community Care and Social Care to clients and service users through Resilience. Resilience provides services across Ireland with their Social Care services supporting people with disabilities in residential, shared care, outreach and day service settings.

The HSE has Service Arrangements with Resilience Healthcare for the provision of services including Disability services and services in Primary Care. In 2022, Resilience Healthcare is being funded €22, 828,060 via the Disability and Primary Care sectors.

With regard to TTM, with the exception of HSE Community Healthcare East (CHO 6), none of the other eight Community Healthcare Areas (CHOs) report outsourcing diagnostic ASD assessments required under Part 2 of the Disability Act (2005) to TTM.

Disability Services, Community Healthcare East report that clinical accountability is retained by the service provider (TTM Healthcare) to ensure that the contracted assessments have been carried out in accordance with best practice and professional standards for multidisciplinary ASD assessments. This includes the provision of appropriate professional and clinical supervision. Clinical governance is required to be delivered by a professional with a minimum of 5 years clinical experience within the relevant client cohort. Monitoring of work provided by TTM Healthcare is ongoing and regular reviews are conducted by CHO 6. Furthermore, CHO6 has a process in place to quality assure the reports. Assessment for ASD is carried out in line with Professional Practice Guidelines for the Assessment, Formulation and Diagnosis of Autism in Children and Adolescents (2nd ed., PSI 2022).

If clinically indicated, school observations and/or cognitive assessments may be undertaken at an additional cost, depending on the nature of additional assessments needed. Any school visits carried out must be in line with Department of Education and HSE COVID guidelines.

Where an Assessment of Need is requested under the Disability Act 2005, TTM Healthcare will take cognisance of the HIQA standards for Assessment of Need.

The above procedures would also apply if undertaken by staff employed by the HSE.

CHO 6 report that the total cost of an ASD Assessment is approximately €2,250 excluding VAT per assessment based on 2 clinicians completing the assessment. However, the cost may vary depending on the particular needs of each child.

CHO 9 are currently engaging with TTM to explore the provision of a multidisciplinary assessment team to undertake assessments required as part of the Assessment of Need process (Disability Act 2005). This engagement includes agreement with and signing of a Service Level Agreement which will be based on agreed criteria if agreed and commissioned.

Further information regarding the HSE Governance Framework and Service Level Agreements is provided below.

In line with appropriate procurement procedures, Garda vetting and due diligence practice, agency staff, sourced from private providers including TTM agency, have been utilised to backfill vacancies on children's disability network teams in CHO areas. These staff include therapists and administration staff, are employees of and report to their Children's Disability Network Team lead agency regarding certain matters for example: payment, leave and pre-employment mandatory training. With regard to clinical and professional work undertaken, these staff report to the respective Children's Disability Network Manager.



Service Level Agreements are not completed for the utilisation of agency staff as this comes under a national agency framework.

HSE Governance Framework

The HSE has established a formal and robust Governance Framework to cover funding relationships with all Non-Statutory Agencies that are contracted to provide services on behalf of the HSE. This includes voluntary organisations funded under Section 38 and Section 39 of the Health Act. The framework was introduced in order to implement the legislative provisions of the Health Act, 2004 and to reflect the requirements for public accountability whereby the HSE is legally obliged to account for all public expenditure on health and personal social services and to contractually underpin the grant-funding provided. All funding arrangements with non-statutory agencies are formalised by complying with this Governance Framework which has two different components:

Part 1 - A Service Arrangement that is signed every 1 to 3 years by both parties and sets out the legal requirements that the agency must comply with to receive funding for the provision of services.

Part 2 – A Set of 10 Schedules which must be completed and signed by the Agency and the HSE which sets out the detail of the service and the exact funding that the HSE is providing for the delivery of this service. This Set of Schedules also identifies the quality standards and best practice guidelines to be adhered to in the provision all services, along with process for managing complaints in relation to service provision.

The Part 2 Service Arrangement /Grant Aid agreement is completed every year for every separate service/ service arrangement with every organisation providing services funded by the HSE. The completion of same involves collaboration and dialogue between the HSE and the Service Provider and involves agreement on anticipated outcomes that the service will deliver, agreed performance management requirements and a reporting timetable regarding reports and meetings. This level of performance monitoring will depend on the type of service, the level of functions and level of funding provided to the organisation.

Yours sincerely



Bernard O'Regan
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations