

13th July 2022

Sean Canney TD
Dail Eireann
Kildare St
Dublin 2

Office of the General Manager
Disability Social Care
Community Healthcare West,
Old Health Centre, Vicar St., Tuam, Co. Galway.
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PQ 35502/22

"To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to an organisation (called Voices for Down Syndrome Galway which provides speech and language therapy to over 100 members annually at a cost of in excess of €150,000 per annum, which they have to fundraise on an on-going basis as they are not supported by your Department despite the on-going gap in the provision of services); if he will make provision for funding for the organisation; and if he will make a statement on the matter".

Dear Deputy Canney

I refer to PQ 35502/22 uploaded on the PAD System on the 5th July 2022 and due for response on the 18th July 2022 regarding representations that you have made to the Minister for Health concerning "if his attention has been drawn to an organisation (called Voices for Down Syndrome Galway which provides speech and language therapy to over 100 members annually at a cost of in excess of €150,000 per annum, which they have to fundraise on an on-going basis as they are not supported by your Department despite the on-going gap in the provision of services); if he will make provision for funding for the organisation; 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.

Please be advised that Voices for Down Syndrome Galway was set up in 2005 by a group of parents who aim to provide a dedicated speech and language therapy service for Down Syndrome Galway branch members. The project currently employs two Senior Speech and Language Therapists and provides services to children and young adults with Down Syndrome.

The Voices for Down Syndrome Galway clinic is based in NUIG, working in collaboration with their Speech Therapy Department, giving students valuable clinical experience in exchange for use of state of the art therapy clinics and access to some of the leading academics in speech and language therapy in the country. The project remains parent run and parent driven. Speech and Language Therapists in CHW Disability Services also liaise with SLTs in Voices for Down Syndrome Galway if they are seeing a child they support.

I have been advised by our Finance Department that Down Syndrome Ireland Galway Branch applied for funding in 2016 under the National Lottery Grant Scheme and were granted €4,000 for a Speech and Language Project – Voices for Down Syndrome Galway. We have checked our records and no further application for funding has been received from the Voices for Down Syndrome Galway project.

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

Yours sincerely
pp Maura Monaghan

Dr Aoife O'Donohue
Acting General Manager
Disability Services Community Healthcare West