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5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Deputy Neasa Hourigan T.D.,  
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Dublin 2  
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Re: PQ 15995/22 – Steering-Service development, NGS

**“To ask the Minister for Health the progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the report of the Steering Committee on Transgender Identity Services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question seeking an update on implementation of the recommendations of the report of the Steering Committee on Transgender Identity Services for service improvement in the National Gender Service, which has been referred to the Ireland East Hospital Group for direct response.

I have had this matter examined and am advised that service development is ongoing at the National Gender Service.

In 2018, additional funding for staff was approved based on an increase in referral rates between 2014 and 2017.

A number of new staff were recruited in 2019 following approval of the 2018 business case. In 2019, a Clinical Lead was appointed. A Clinical Governance structure was put in place by the National Gender Service team in 2019 and multiple quality improvement initiatives have been implemented by the staff at the National Gender Service since then.

These developments are ongoing. However, since 2018 there has been a further increase in referral rates. Between 2014 and 2018, the average annual referral rate was approximately 200 per year. It now exceeds 300 per year and does appear to be stabilising. While referral rates now seem to be plateauing, demand for the National Gender Service continues to exceed capacity.

Given the further increase in demand since 2018, the waiting time for initial assessment continues to increase as demand continues to exceed capacity. This has caused significant distress as people are waiting longer and longer for an appointment. Current waiting times are approaching three years and will continue to increase in the absence of additional investment.



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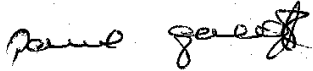
 Ireland East  
HOSPITAL GROUP



To reduce waiting times, the National Gender Service has submitted business cases for additional staff and clinical space that will meet the increase in demand. These business cases rest within the Acute Hospital and Mental Health Divisions of the HSE. Decisions on these business cases are pending. If these business cases are approved then the National Gender Service will proceed to recruitment and will reduce the waiting list to a matter of months rather than years.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



Paul Gallagher  
Chief Director of Nursing and Midwifery



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