



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
Cúram Sláinte Phobail, Iarthar,
An Sean Ionad Sláinte, Sráid an Bhiocáire, Tuaim, Co. na
Gaillimhe
T: 09337951 R:alma.joyce@hse.ie

5th May 2022

Claire Kerrane TD
Dail Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Office of the General Manager
Disability Social Care
Community Healthcare West,
Old Health Centre, Vicar St., Tuam, Co. Galway.
Tel: 09337951 Email: alma.joyce@hse.ie

PQ 22355/22

“To ask the Minister for Health the reason that school age services were transferred from a service provider (Brothers of Charity Roscommon) to the HSE; the number of children on waiting lists for therapies under the HSE in County Roscommon following this transition; if his attention has been drawn to the fact that since this transition, children who were getting some service under the initial service provider albeit minimal are now getting no services at all; the actions he will take to address this; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.

Dear Deputy Kerrane

I refer to PQ 22355/22 uploaded on the PAD System on the 3rd May 2022 and due for response on the 16th May 2022 regarding representations that you have made to the Minister for Health concerning “the reason that school age services were transferred from a service provider (Brothers of Charity Roscommon) to the HSE; the number of children on waiting lists for therapies under the HSE in County Roscommon following this transition; if his attention has been drawn to the fact that since this transition, children who were getting some service under the initial service provider albeit minimal are now getting no services at all; the actions he will take to address this; 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 children’s disability services (Early Intervention and School Age Services) in Roscommon were reconfigured in 2021 and are moving to the new Progressing Disability Services (PDS) for children and young people model. Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme 0-18 (PDS) is a National HSE change programme for the provision of therapeutic services for children from birth to 18 years of age that aims to transform the way children’s disability services are delivered. It is being rolled out nationally by the HSE in partnership with its funded voluntary organisations partners

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.

Ove the past few months, the process of reconfiguration of children’s services has been and still is a complex process including the transfer of children’s files and realignment of staff. Clinical input from the team members was important during this process and as a result, this took longer than anticipated as those involved also had to manage their existing caseloads.

Waiting lists have increased as a result of a significant number of children who were previously with the Galway Roscommon ASD Services transferring into the CDNT9. In addition, a number of posts have become vacant and as with all other services, the new CDNT9 (North Roscommon North East Galway Children's Disability Network Team) are experiencing difficulties in filling those positions. The additional numbers of children on the caseload together with the vacant posts continues to be a major challenge for those members of team still in post. Recruitment is ongoing however in the meantime the resources available are stretched.

The reconfiguration of staff has meant that a number of new staff have joined the team and others have moved to new teams. As in all sectors, Children's Disability Services are finding it extremely challenging to recruit staff to fill the permanent vacancies. While we continue to actively recruit, many of the positions on the team are still vacant. Waiting list initiatives have been set up to address this with the recruitment of temporary staff, as an interim measure, but this too is challenging with the resulting impact on waiting lists and children and families who need support.

We recognise that parents may be anxious to get an appointment date for their child and we hope to link with them as soon as possible but with the large number on the waiting list, we also want to be honest with them and advise that it may take some time. In the meantime, parents can contact their child's team if there is anything urgent that parents need immediate support with. We will endeavour to support the family as best we can. Over the next few months, our plan is to continue to support any urgent needs identified and to link with families to agree a plan on how best we can work together to support the children's goals.

With regard to staffing in CDNT9, please be advised that there is currently just one Physiotherapist in post where they should be three. Two new Occupational Therapists have taken up duty in the last month and have completed their induction, however, these posts were filled on a temporary basis and previous experience notes that staff move on quickly as there are so many permanent posts available to them. Recruitment is ongoing with Speech and Language Therapy positions

In the meantime, the existing CDNT 9 team members continue to support all children with disabilities and their families to the best of their ability within the resources available to them and particularly endeavour to support urgent and critical needs as they arise.

We acknowledge that this is a stressful time for families as we work through this significant change to services for all children and young people with complex needs.

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

Yours sincerely



Alma Joyce
General Manager
Disability Services
Community Healthcare West