



25th May 2022

Mr. Johnny Mythen TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 22839/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of whole-time equivalents that each children's disability network team in County Wexford should have by each profession and by title; the number of these posts that are vacant; the length of time they have been vacant; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Mythen,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

Under the new Progressing Disability Services children with non-complex needs will be offered services through Primary Care and children with complex needs will be offered services through the Children's Disability Network Teams. Children with complex needs associated with their disabilities access services from a Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT). CDNTs are now in place across the South East and provide supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age. Services and supports provided are based on children's needs rather than diagnosis and regardless of where they live or which schools they attend.

There are four Network Teams in Wexford with a total current staffing complement of 9 Occupational Therapy posts, 13 Speech and Language Therapy posts, 6 Psychology posts, 4 Social Work posts, 2.5 Nursing posts, 2.5 Dietetic posts and 5 Physiotherapy posts. There are currently 16 vacant posts across all 4 networks in Wexford.

I can also confirm that SECH CHO 5 has secured funding in 2022 for 26 new posts across all CDNTs. The HSE are actively recruiting to fill these posts along with trying to fill the above current vacancies which will enable teams to increase the provision of assessment and intervention.

As with other areas all disability services within CHO SECH are experiencing significant recruitment challenges to Children's Disability Network Teams. Vacant posts have been advertised and in some cases re-advertised however we have been unsuccessful in filling a number of vacancies from these campaigns. In addition SECH continues to express posts out to current national panels. Interviews are underway in SECH for Senior Occupational Therapists and Staff Grade Physiotherapist positions are currently being advertised as part of a national recruitment process (closing date 31st May 2022). Furthermore an advertising campaign for Senior Physiotherapists recently closed and a recruitment campaign for Senior Speech & Language is



currently underway for SECH. The HSE/SECH and National Disabilities are reviewing all options to address the current vacancies as quickly as possible.

In the meantime, the Children's Disability Network Managers are also exploring different ways to offer support to children and families currently waiting to access services. This includes developing webinars, group based workshops, information sessions and the development of a repository of resources for children and their families to promote and enable wellbeing at home.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Ennis', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ms. Anne Ennis
Head of Service, Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare