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18th December 2022

Deputy Pauline Tully
Dáil Éireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

E: pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie / cc: pquestions@hse.ie

Re: PQ 59294/22

Question: To ask the Minister for Health the number of access officers responsible for providing or arranging for and co-ordinating assistance and guidance to people with disabilities accessing his Departments' services who are employed in his Department as required by section 26 (2) of the Disability Act 2005; the way that his Department makes its customers aware of this service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Tully,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

In order to comply with the Disability Act 2005, the HSE has a network of 238 access officers located throughout the country across community and acute services. Contact details for access officers in the HSE can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/yourhealthservice/access/accessofficers>. To support the work of the Access Officers, the HSE published National Guidelines for Accessible Health and Social Care Services in 2014. These Guidelines offer practical guidance to access officers and staff about how they can provide accessible services. A review is underway of access officers and the National Guidelines on Accessible Health and Social Care Services to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities who are accessing HSE services are met.

If you require any further information or clarification please do contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Caoimhe Gleeson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Caoimhe Gleeson
General Manager
HSE National Office for Human Rights and Equality Policy
HSE Strategy and Research