



Oifig an Príomhoifigeach
Eagraíocht Cúram Sláinte Pobail Lár Tire,
An Lú, An Mhí

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte,
Oifig Cheantair, Bóthar Ardáin,
An Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí.

Office of the Chief Officer
Community Health Organisation
Midlands Louth Meath

HSE,
Area Office, Arden Road,
Tullamore, Co Offaly

www.hse.ie
@hselive
@MLMCommHealth

t 057 9359787
e CHO8@hse.ie

16th December, 2022

Mr. Darren O'Rourke T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: Parliamentary Question - 59489/22

To ask the Minister for Health further to parliamentary question no.719 11 October 2022, what qualifies as a meaningful contact; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Rourke,

I refer to your recent correspondence referenced above and I outline Midlands Louth Meath CHO response below:

As outlined in response to PQ 49986/22, the definition of initial contact of new referrals has been defined as a meeting which includes:

- (1) providing an orientation to the service;
- (2) profiling parental priorities for their child/family;
- (3) achieving a better understanding of a child's needs;
- (4) based on parental priorities & informed by observations, developing some agreed initial goals;
- (5) providing guidance on strategies specific to the agreed initial goals that parents can use immediately;
- (6) facilitating completion of initial IFSP within six weeks.

During this period, the CDNT may contribute to a shared understanding of a child's needs via, for example, informal observation in natural environments; administration of screening procedures; & discussion with the child & their family. To qualify as a 'case,' while each child does not have to meet all of the above 6 definition elements of an 'initial contact' (e.g., had an IFSP completed within six weeks), their initial contact had to be **meaningful**.

The initial contact to be meaningful, in that it added value to understanding &/or addressing a child's needs. Hence, this metric captures those children who were being provided a service, whether that was working on an IFSP, or waiting for or receiving an intervention as informed by a child's IFSP.



Meaningful contact is any contact that supports families to better understand their child's strengths and needs. Contacts that help families recognise their role in promoting their child's development. Contacts that nurture parents/guardians or caregivers' confidence in noticing and creating everyday opportunities to promote children's independence, participation and wellbeing and build relationships with others. Contacts can be phone calls, visits to schools, provision of supporting literature/strategies to assist parents with their child, these are some of the meaningful contacts a family can benefit from.

I trust the above is in order and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Des O'Flynn', written over a horizontal line.

Des O'Flynn
Chief Officer
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation