



Ceannasaí Seirbhíse do
Dhaoine Faoi Mhíchumas

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Mr Alan Farrell, TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Email: alan.farrell@oireachtas.ie

PQ 47537/22 "To ask the Minister for Health the number of clinical positions that are available throughout the children's disability network team in CHO DNCC; and if he will make a statement on the matter." **Alan Farrell TD**

Dear Deputy Farrell,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

The Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT) were established in Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City & County (CHO DNCC) on 20th September 2021. It is a very significant change programme with a new model of service which focuses on outcomes for children and families rather than inputs. An interdisciplinary team will work with each family to develop an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and support children and parents to reach goals identified on the plan. The focus is on the goals that children and families may meaningfully aim to achieve at home and steps they may take together with the Children's Disability Network Team rather than the number of sessions of therapies like speech and language.

CHO DNCC Disability Services have significant concerns regarding our current waiting lists for some CDNT services. We are constantly exploring all options available to us to address these waiting lists to improve the access to services for children and their families. We are acutely aware of the high demand for services in our CHO area. This demand for services is caused by a number of factors, including but not limited to significant population growth coupled with some vulnerable population groups and areas of deprivation.

At present the average vacancy rate across CDNTs in Dublin North City and County is almost 40%. The HSE and all lead agencies are working to address this skills shortage through targeted recruitment campaigns, overseas recruitment and initiatives with training colleges.

Concurrently I, as Head of Service Disability, chair a CHO DNCC Governance Group overseeing CDNTs, and this group is exploring if there are any alternative staff grades or qualifications which may assist staff in CDNTs whilst they navigate the significant change within service delivery. The level of staff vacancies is not easily resolved as there are essentially more posts for Allied Health Professionals than qualified staff available nationally. We have also increased the level of administrative support to these teams. The teams are also experiencing high levels of maternity leave. In this regard and in an effort to mitigate the risk, I have agreed with the CEOs of the Lead Agencies to approve the backfill of maternity leave which is not resourced within the allocated budget and Inter Agency Agreement for delivery of children's services in CDNTs.

I assure you that we are continuing to work towards improved access to services with a focus on rolling out universal and targeted care pathways for children and families on waiting lists, including developing webinars,

group-based workshops and information sessions for children and families and development of a repository of online resources for children and their families to promote and enable wellbeing at home.

The number of clinical positions (working time equivalent or WTE) that are available throughout the 12 CDNTs in CHO DNCC is as follows:

CDNT	Allocated Clinical Staff	Actual Clinical staff in place WTE	Vacant Clinical Posts (incl Maternity Leave)
BALBRIGGAN	27.17 WTE	10.28 WTE	14.89 WTE
BLANCHARDSTOWN	20.74 WTE	16.04 WTE	4.70 WTE
BLAKESTOWN	24.90 WTE	13.96 WTE	11 WTE
BALLYMUN	14.71 WTE	11.66 WTE	3.05 WTE
CLONTARF	17.89 WTE	14.10 WTE	3.79 WTE
COASTAL	15.80 WTE	11.75 WTE	4.05 WTE
COOLOCK	14.80 WTE	10.05 WTE	4.75 WTE
CABRA/GRANGEGORMAN	27.10 WTE	14 WTE	13.10 WTE
FINGLAS	20.20 WTE	8.20 WTE	12.00 WTE
KILBARRACK	25.70 WTE	15.55 WTE	11.15 WTE
NORTH INNER CITY	12.4 WTE	9 WTE	3.4 WTE
SWORDS	21.8 WTE	13.21 WTE	9 WTE

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Olive Hanley
Head of Service for Disability