



Ceannasaí Seirbhíse do
Dhaoine Faoi Mhíchumas

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26th April 2023

Ms Denise Mitchell, TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Email: denise.mitchell@oireachtas.ie

PQ 16447/23 *“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of speech and language therapist posts that are currently within children disability network teams in CHO9; and if he will make a statement on the matter”.* **Denise Mitchell TD**

Dear Deputy Mitchell,

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

There is currently 34.79 WTE speech and language therapist posts in Children Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) in Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO DNCC). Unfortunately, CHO DNCC is experiencing vacancies ranging from 20-50% across the 12 CDNTs.

The CDNTs in CHO DNCC were established in late September 2021. The reconfiguration of the children’s disability services has been a very significant change and has necessitated the development of new teams, a new model of service that adheres to national policies and required development of new skill sets and new care pathways.

The CDNTs and Lead Agencies, Central Remedial Clinic (CRC), St Michael’s House (SMH) and Avista have worked closely together to manage the change process, mitigate risks and promote the new model of service across the 12 CDNTs in CHO DNCC. CDNTs are now providing a new model of service for children with disabilities and their families in CHO DNCC for over 18 months. The introduction of CDNTs represents an evidence-based fundamental shift to a child and family centred model of care. This model of service sees a family set and achieve their own goals, supported by an interdisciplinary team. The ultimate goal of this approach is to enable children to flourish at home and in their communities.

CHO DNCC Disability Services with the CRC, SMH and AVISTA are running a targeted international recruitment campaign for the staff grades referenced above and interviews are ongoing. Concurrently CHO DNCC have undertaken to increase administrative support to all the CDNTs, to enable existing clinical staff to devote more of their time directly to children and families.

It is important to note and highlight that notwithstanding the level of clinical staff vacancies for clinical grades the CDNTs in CHO DNCC have increased their caseload by 654 children since reconfiguration.

I trust this information is satisfactory. If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Olive Hanley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ms Olive Hanley
Head of Service for Disability