



21st April, 2023

Deputy Jim O'Callaghan TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

PQ 19115/23 To ask the Minister for Health for an update on the commitment in the Programme for Government to review and improve the national policy document entitled 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risks of Abuses, National Policy and Procedures; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Jim O'Callaghan

Dear Deputy O'Callaghan,

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 HSE is committed to improving Safeguarding Operations. While this is not policy dependent the HSE have been preparing to implement the Department of Health Safeguarding Policy which will be required to be operated across all of the services we provide and fund. We expect that this policy will be launched in 2023.

In the interim, the HSE have made significant improvements including an enhanced training and development framework with over 130,000 completions of training to date. Additional social work and support staff have been added over each of the previous three years to the National Safeguarding Office and Safeguarding Protection Teams, including via National Service Plan 2023. Significantly, in 2023 for the first time Ireland's Safeguarding Operations will benefit from a single case management system which has been successfully procured by the HSE. This system will improve both operational effectiveness but also data quality to enable future planning and service delivery.

The HSE will continue to improve Safeguarding Operations and this will principally be in the context of Slaintecare and the establishment of Regional Health Areas.

Yours sincerely,=

Dr. JP Nolan
Head of Quality Patient Safety
Community Operations