



Ms. Carol Nolan TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

27th February 2023

PQ no. 9775/23. To ask the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the operation of the Children's Palliative Care Programme, including the number of children who have availed of the programme's supports; if there are vacancies for the consultant post or clinical nurse co-ordinators at the present time; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Carol Nolan

Dear Deputy Nolan,

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.

Palliative Care for Children with Life-limiting Conditions in Ireland – a National Policy (DoH 2009) guides provision of palliative care services for children and their families in Ireland. Children's palliative care is provided via a shared care approach involving GPs, Paediatricians, community Specialist Palliative Care Teams and Clinical Nurse Coordinators working collaboratively to care for the child and the family in the home setting. A key enabler of this model of care is the remote support provided by the Consultants in Paediatric Palliative Medicine and their specialist team in Children's Health Ireland Crumlin and Temple Street. The Voluntary sector including Laura Lynn Children's Hospice, Irish Cancer Society and Jack and Jill Foundation support the statutory services with additional in-home nursing and respite supports for families.

In 2020 the HSE commissioned Professor Bee Wee (National Clinical Director for Palliative and End of Life Care, NHS) to chair an expert advisory group to set out an operational and governance framework for the provision of palliative care to children with life limiting conditions in the community in Ireland. This report endorsed the multi-agency model of care being operated for children with palliative care needs in the community and made recommendations on additional workforce resourcing and educational supports required to support the model.

Additional resourcing was provided in 2021/2022 to support the Childrens Palliative Care Programme. This included:

1. €2.3 million in funding to enhance and develop Laura Lynn's Children's Hospice and outreach services. This funding has been used to increase Laura Lynn's Hospice in the Home Service across Leinster and supported the opening of a new Laura Lynn Hub in Munster.
2. 6.5 additional Clinical Nurse Coordinators (CNC's) were provided to take the total number of CNC's nationally to 18.5. This will ensure there are two CNC's in each Community Health Organisation. Currently there are 16 CNC's in place with 2.5 vacancies.
3. 1 Consultant in Paediatric Palliative Medicine and 1 Clinical Nurse Specialist for the Specialist team in Childrens Health Ireland Crumlin. These posts have been recruited.



National Lead for Palliative Care
Integrated Operations – Planning
Health Service Executive | Southgate Unit
1.02 | Floor 1 | Colpe Cross | Dublin Road |
Drogheda | Co. Meath, A92DK2
Email:maurice.dillon1@hse.ie

4. The creation of 4 Regional Paediatricians with a Special Interest in Palliative Medicine for Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway to enhance regional leadership and support professionals delivering palliative care to children in their home. It's expected these posts will be recruited in 2023.

In 2022, the number of children receiving palliative care services was as follows:

211 children received Specialist Palliative Care in Crumlin and Temple St Hospitals

434 children received Specialist Palliative Care from the Clinical Nurse Coordinators in the Community

77 children received care from Laura Lynn Inpatient Palliative Care Unit

I trust this is in order and answers your query.

Regards,

Maurice Dillon
National Lead for Palliative Care, Operations - Planning