



Oifig Ceannasaí Oibríochtaí,  
Oibríochtaí Pobail, Cúram Priomhúil

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**19<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Deputy Higgins,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ 33532/23 - To ask the Minister for Health whether the National Access Policy is being followed by primary care in each CHO; which CHOs are implementing if fully, partially and not-at-all; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

**- Emer Higgins**

Dear Deputy Higgins,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question (PQ 33532/23) which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The National Access Policy (NAP) ensures that children are seen at the level of service nearest their home which best addresses their needs. Access should be needs led rather than diagnosis led. The policy outlines that children with non-complex needs should be treated within primary care. Children with complex needs should be seen by Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs). The policy outlines that CDNTs and Primary Care Services should have clear protocols for the effective transition of children between services when appropriate.

The establishment of the CDNTs has brought about an increase in the number of requests to Primary Care to provide services to children with more complex developmental and disability presentations. These include for example Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Brachial Plexus Injury and requests for psychological support for families with a new diagnosis of a disability.

I can confirm that all CHOs have implemented the National Access Policy. Work is on-going to ensure that the level of resources required to meet the needs of all children are in place regardless of whether the child is seen by the CDNT or Primary Care services.

I trust this is of assistance.

**Seán McArt**

General Manager Primary Care  
National Community Operations