



27th November 2023

Mr. Brendan Griffin, TD,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Email: brendan.griffin@oireachtas.ie

PQ 43732/23 “To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if additional resources will be immediately provided to address the five-year waiting list for intervention for children who have been accepted by the Swords disability network team; and if he will make a statement on the matter.” **Brendan Griffin, TD.**

Dear Deputy Griffin,

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

Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County (CHO DNCC) Disability Services acknowledge that the waiting list for Swords Children’s Disability Network Team (CDNT) is unsatisfactory and want to reassure that considerable work is ongoing to improve waiting time for the service.

The Swords CDNT is operated by the Central Remedial Clinic (CRC). The Team is experiencing challenges with service delivery arising from recruitment and retention of key health services staff. Unfortunately, there are more positions vacant than qualified staff available nationally and internationally. The Swords CDNT is currently experiencing vacancies of approximately 38%.

CHO DNCC Disability Services with lead agencies including the CRC have taken a number of measures to fill staff vacancies. This includes:

- Local and international recruitment campaigns,
- Attending job fairs,
- Advertisement through recruitment agencies,
- Contacts with third level institutions to target graduates
- Advertising on professional body websites

These initiatives have been quite successful with a number of candidates interviewed and offered positions within CHO DNCC CDNT’s, whilst further interviews are continually ongoing.

Despite the high vacancy level and caseload, the Swords CDNT continue to actively work to reduce their waiting list and open new clients.

At present sufficient funding is available to the CRC. CRC are utilising savings from vacant posts to commission other supports to the children and families who are awaiting services.

As an example, the Swords CDNT have offered a Behaviour Support intervention to families and will extend the range of supports commissioned in line with procurement and governance requirements.

Initiatives to enhance access for families on the waiting list to webinars, workshops and resources are progressing.

Children on the waiting list with urgent/high priority needs whose parent contact the CDNT, will have their information reviewed as part of a weekly case meeting. The child's information is reviewed and if urgent in nature the child is offered a priority appointment/contact as an episode of care. The child then returns to the waiting list for their other needs once this urgent need is supported.

CHO DNCC aim to increase administrative support to all the CDNTs, including Swords, to enable existing clinical staff to devote more of their time directly to children and families.

I trust this information clarifies this matter for you.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Olive Hanley
Head of Service for Disability