



Head of Service Primary Care

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Mr. Cian O Callaghan T.D
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PQ 19907/25 – *“To ask the Minister for Health –the steps she is taking to address the lack of general practitioners across Dublin North City and County, in particular given the rapidly growing population;-if he plans to provide further primary care centres across this area; and if she will make a statement on the matter” - Cian O Callaghan, TD*

Dear Deputy O Callaghan,

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

The HSE Primary Care General Practitioner, GP Unit, Integrated Areas of Dublin North County and Dublin North City & West, have advised that GPs are private practitioners, most of whom hold a GMS contract with the HSE for the provision of GP services without charge to medical card and GP visit card holders. As self-employed practitioners, GPs may establish practices at a place of their own choosing. There is no prescribed ratio of GPs to patients and the State does not regulate the number of GPs that can set up in a town or community.

A number of measures have been taken in recent years to increase the number of GPs practicing in the State and thereby improve access to GP services for all patients across the country.

Under the 2019 GP Agreement additional annual expenditure provided for general practice was increased. This provided for significant increases in capitation fees for participating GMS GPs, and new fees for additional services and increased practice supports.

The GP Agreement 2023 further increased GP capitation fees, increased the existing subsidy rates for practice staff, and introduced a grant support for additional staff capacity as well a practice staff maternity leave support. These measures make general practice in Ireland a more attractive career choice for doctors.

Annual intake to the GP training scheme has been increased by approximately 80% from 2019 to 2024, with 350 new entrant training places made available

from 2024. 346 new entrants commenced training last year, a 21% increase on the previous year's intake of 286.

The development of Primary Care Centres and Health Centres within the Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County, Dublin North City and West is a priority for the Health Service Executive. Current developments are as follows;

- **North Inner City Network, Amiens St** – HSE have recently secured the acquisition of 110 Amiens Street and planning has been granted for the provision of community services in the inner city. There will be no Primary Care facilities only HSE Health and Wellbeing services available at this location.
- **Ballymun Network, Ballymun Primary Care Centre** - HSE are currently tendering for a contractor to carry out configuration works in the Primary Care Centre to increase the scope of services including the provision of an Integrated Care Programme for the Provision and Management of Chronic Disease (ICPOP). It is planned the following services will become available once the works are carried out for both adults and children: Dentist Clinics, Dietetics, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Psychology and Speech & Language Therapy. GP Out of Hours, Counselling in Primary Care and Community Rehabilitation will also be available for adults and children. Social work services will be made available for adults only.

In addition CAMHS, TUSLA, Mental Health for Adults services and the Ballymun GP Practice will be available at this location.

- **Santry Network, Omni** – HSE works at the Omni Integrated Care Centre are complete for the provision of community healthcare services at the Omni Shopping Centre. The following services are available, including a full range of Primary Care Services provided at Larkhill Primary Care Team, Integrated Care Team Chronic Diseases and the Integrated Care Team for Older persons.
- **Clontarf Network** In order to support Clontarf Network, the HSE have recently completed works to deliver a new community healthcare network base at Bayside Shopping Centre. Equipping and commissioning are underway with the facility operational in Q2 2025. A number of key staff will be located here including Nursing, Administration, Social Work and Physiotherapy.
- **Blakestown Network, Ongar** – Following no valid proposals received for operational lease in 2019, HSE are working with Fingal County Council regarding potential alternative sites. As there has been no valid proposals received for Blakestown this information would not be available until such time as a potential alternative site has been identified.
- **Blanchardstown Network, Corduff PCC** – A grant of planning for a 2,150m² extension to the existing PCC was received in October 2024 and detailed design is underway. The services provided in the Blanchardstown Network -

Corduff Primary Care Centre are as follows: GP Service, Dental Clinics, Public Health Nursing, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy, Social Work, Psychology, Mental Health and Addiction services. The new extension to Corduff PCC was progressed to enable the provision of Enhanced Community Care services to include Integrated Care Team for Chronic Disease and Older Persons Services.

- **Balbriggan Network, Lusk** – The HSE have secured a site in the town centre for the development of a Primary Care Centre (PCC). Capital submission has been approved and following engagement with Fingal County Council, the design team tender has commenced. Once this is complete discussions will take place on which services will operate out of this Primary Care Centre. Currently the following services operate out of Lusk Health Centre:
 - Public Health Nursing
 - Speech and Language Paediatric services
 - Community Medical Doctor clinics operate out of this centre approximately once a month
- **Balbriggan Network, Skerries** – The HSE are reviewing leased and capital project options for the development of a PCC in this area. Once this is complete discussions will take place to what services will operate out of this Primary Care Centre. Currently the following services operate out of Skerries Health Centre:
 - Public Health Nursing
 - Primary Care Counselling
 - Dietetic Clinics operate out of this centre also approximately once a week.
- **Swords Network, Swords** - The HSE has recently completed the acquisition of the Hertz Building at Seatown Road in Swords for the provision of a Primary Care Centre for the Swords area. Initial arrangements are being progressed to accommodate staff in the premises prior to seeking a planning grant to change of use to healthcare. A design Team is currently being procured to progress the design, planning and development of the Primary Care Centre.

Based on services currently operating out of Swords Health Centre and overflow offices in Unit 2 Balheary the below services would move to the new Primary Care Centre once delivered:

- Community Medical Doctor clinics
- Dental Clinics
- Health & Wellbeing Clinics – QUIT (smoking) and SAOR (alcohol)
- Mental Health
- Primary Care Dietetics – Adult and Paediatrics
- Primary Care Occupational Therapy – Adult and Paediatrics
- Primary Care Physiotherapy – Adult and Paediatrics
- Primary Care Psychology – Paediatrics,
- Counselling in Primary Care

- Primary Care Social work
- Primary Care Speech and Language Therapy – Adult and Paediatrics
- Public Health Nursing
- Social Inclusion Services
- **Swords Network, Donabate** - A new tender using the HSE's Primary Care Operational Lease Mechanism has concluded and approvals to progress are currently being sought. Currently the following services operate out of Donabate Health Centre:
 - Primary Care Occupational Therapy – Adult
 - Primary Care Physiotherapy – Adult
 - Public Health Nursing
 - Community Medical Doctor clinics
 - Health & Wellbeing Clinics – QUIT (smoking)
 - Social Inclusion Services

With the growing population of Donabate it is hoped the following Primary Care services would be complemented with the following services:

- Primary Care Dietetics for Adults and Paediatrics
- Primary Care Social Work services
- Primary Care Speech and Language Therapy for Paediatrics
- Primary Care Psychology Services
- Gym space for therapy services
- Mental Health Services
- **Coastal Network, Baldoyle** – The HSE are currently pursuing options to develop a PCC in the area. In addition to this, works are complete to provide interim clinical and administrative services at Bayside Primary Care Centre. Equipping and commissioning are underway with the facility operational in Q2 2025.

For Bayside Primary Care Centre (Coastal Network) the following services will be available:

- Occupational Therapy (Adult)
- Physiotherapy (Adult)
- Social Work services
- Visiting clinicians

It is hoped some of the nursing services from Baldoyle Health Centre will also be operational from Bayside, however this is still in discussion.

- **Kilbarrack Network, Kilbarrack** – Significant investment is now complete with the refurbishment and extension to the existing Health Centre (HC) which became operational in Q3 2024. The following services are being provide in the newly refurbished Kilbarrack HC
 - Primary Care Occupational Therapy (Adult)
 - Primary Care Physiotherapy (Adult)
 - Public Health Nursing (Adult and Paediatrics)
 - Dental services
 - HSE Addiction services run a methadone and needle exchange clinic
 - Mental Health provide clinics and domiciliary services

- Social Worker services provide clinic based and domiciliary services

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Forde
Head of Service Primary Care
HSE Integrated Health Areas of Dublin North County and
Dublin North City & West