



**10<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

Ms Denise Mitchell TD  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

Email: [Denise.Mitchell@oireachtas.ie](mailto:Denise.Mitchell@oireachtas.ie)

**PQ 3227/25** – *“To ask the Minister for Health when the freeze on public health nurses conducting developmental checks for all children in the Killester/Millmount area in Dublin will end; what steps are being taken to ensure the timely resumption of this vital service; the measures being taken to ensure adequate staffing levels within the service; and if he will make a statement on the matter”*

**- Denise Mitchell TD**

Dear Deputy Mitchell,

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 recognises the importance of our workforce. The HSE operates National Caseload Prioritisation Procedure for Public Health Nursing (PHN) Service. This procedure aims to assist managers of the Public Health Nursing services to prepare for and respond to staff resource shortages by prioritising the caseload in a consistent and safe manner ensuring each PHN has a realistic workload.

The recruitment and retention of PHNs remains a challenge nationally particularly the greater Dublin area. IHA Dublin North City and West is currently experiencing resource pressures and regrettably in January 2025 IHA Dublin North City reverted to prioritisation caseloads to enable the continued provision of a service for our most vulnerable clients. A number of short-term temporary solutions have been undertaken to prioritise resources. These include integrating services, reorganisation of work, engagement with the Graduate Nurse Scheme to fill vacant positions, and where necessary the redeployment of staff. Where staff shortages arise, the HSE continues to prioritise and support patients who have the greatest need in the community.

Our staffing situation is monitored closely to ensure the safest possible cover is being provided on a day to day basis and we have allocated additional emergency staffing resource to bring the networks to a sufficient level and will be reverting to operating a full service in our area by March 2025.

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,

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**Vanessa Fitzgerald**  
**General Manager Primary Care**  
**Dublin North City & West**