

3rd March, 2025

Mr. Pat Buckley, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 5797/25

"To ask the Minister for Health if she is aware that there is currently no public health nurse in Midleton, Cork, meaning that the children of this area are suffering as this nursing shortage means they are missing out on vital checks; and if she can take urgent action to ensure that this shortage is addressed without further delay".

Dear Deputy Buckley,

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.

The Public Health Nursing Service provides clinical care, following a clinical needs assessment to clients/patients including:

- Child health development;
- Children with complex medical needs;
- Older persons;
- Young chronically sick; and
- Palliative care patients.

There is currently one Public Health Nurse area in Midleton vacant due to statutory leave. The Public Health team in Midleton are endeavouring to continue to provide developmental screening to all children residing in the Midleton catchment. Cross-cover arrangements are in place and our highly-skilled Community Registered Nurses are also providing support. However, due to the current vacancy there are some delays of 4-6 weeks in appointments being issued. All children will be offered appointments for developmental screening.

There has been a number of Public Health Nursing posts approved recently across Cork and Kerry and we are working to recruit into these posts as quickly as possible.

In the meantime, if a parent is concerned at any time about their child's development, they should contact their GP or local Public Health Nursing service.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mari O'Donovan
Interim Head of Service - Primary Care,
HSE South West