



Príomhoifigeach Cliniciúil
Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Cliniciúil

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Barry Heneghan
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
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29th July 2025

PQ 41626/25 - To ask the Minister for Health the role of the Chief Social Worker of the HSE; how this role interacts with both the National Safeguarding Office and the six regional safeguarding and protection teams; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Heneghan,

Thank you for your representation.

The first HSE Chief Social Worker was appointed to the role in August 2024.

The Chief Social Worker is leading on the establishment of the Office of the Chief Social Worker, delivering a programme of change that will; a) progress the social work component of the ongoing programme of health and social care reform and b) ensure the timely implementation of the recommendations of the McIlroy Report on Adult Safeguarding.

The Chief Social Worker also works closely with the Social Care Projects Unit in the Department of Health on preparing for implementation of the new National Adult Safeguarding Policy Framework, due before Government in Sept 2025.

The Chief Social Worker provides professional leadership to the social work workforce, building their capability to ensure that the HSE's strategic and operational social work needs are met in the interests of the population. The Chief Social Worker has governance of the HSE Children First National Office and, from Sept 2025, the HSE National Office for Human Rights and Equality Policy.

As recommended by the "Moving Forward; Adult Safeguarding in the HSE" report, the HSE National Safeguarding Office (NSO) has come under the governance of the Chief Social Worker. The NSO continues to have a strategic focus, with core functions including Education and Training, Public Awareness, Data Intelligence, Best Practice Guidance, Policy Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement.

The HSE Regional Safeguarding and Protection Teams continue to practice under local operational governance, reporting to the relevant Head of Service or IHA lead. These teams provide oversight and



direct clinical case management of adult safeguarding concerns across community and service settings as per the 2014 HSE policy. Whilst the teams report into regional structures, there is regular engagement with both the Chief Social Worker and the National Safeguarding Office.

I hope this provides you with some assistance.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Ormond
General Manager
Office of the Chief Clinical Officer