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FSS an Iardheiscirt

Áras na Ceachan,
Páirc Ghnó agus Teicneolaíochta,
Bóthar na Modh Feirme,
Corcaigh. T12 XHT4

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Mr. Pádraig Rice T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 29715/25.

"To ask the Minister for Health the reasons a specific HSE support service for parents has been moved online (details supplied); if her Department will consider reversing this decision; and if she will make a statement on the matter."

Details supplied: Parents of children with autism in Cork were able to attend a meeting about the dietary needs of children with autism. This was held in St Marys Primary Care centre on the Northside of Cork. Parents expressed how positive this meeting was and how it gave them an opportunity to meet with other parents and to build a support network. The parents have now been told that the HSE has decided to move these meetings online. This takes away all the community aspect of this meetings

Dear Deputy Rice,

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 community nutrition and dietetic service see children aged 0 to 17 years who have nutrition related issues which fall within the referral criteria.

Children who may benefit from the Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service may have some of the following needs:

- Faltering growth.
- Food allergy.
- Overweight and obesity.
- Gastrointestinal conditions e.g. coeliac disease, constipation.
- Anaemia.
- Poorly balanced diets.

All services are currently exploring the use of telehealth and virtual health to reach more people. Parents had identified the need for a virtual group to allow easier access to this information session and positive feedback has been received from participants who attended virtual information sessions, both in relation to information presented and the ability to engage with other parents and families.

As staffing allows the plan would be to have both virtual and face-to-face sessions available going forward.

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

Yours sincerely,

Susanne O'Sullivan
Acting Head of Service - Primary Care,
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