



Deputy Colm Burke.
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

22nd of February 2024

PQ Number: 48789/23

PQ Question: To ask the Minister for Health to outline what contingency measures are in place in circumstances where a psychiatrist employed by CAMHS is absent from work due to illness, in particular in cases where children have started medication and require adjustment/alteration of same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Colm Burke

Dear Deputy Burke,

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. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide specialist mental health services to those aged up to 18 years, who have reached the threshold for a diagnosis of moderate to severe mental health disorder that require the input of multi-disciplinary mental health teams.

Most, if not all, CAMHS teams have a Consultant Psychiatrist as well as a Senior Registrar or Registrar who works under the supervision of the Consultant Psychiatrist. If the absence is short term, then there is no urgency to alter/change the medication until the Consultant returns to work. However, if the absence is planned to be a longer term, then another Consultant from another team may be requested to provide clinical supervision to the Senior Registrar and/or Registrar if a child or young persons' medication is due to be reviewed.

In addition, for longer term absences, a Locum Consultant Psychiatrist to cover the clinical case load may be sought. The oversight responsibility for medical manpower cover rests with the Clinical Director and/or Executive Clinical Director in consultation with the Head of Services for Mental Health in each CHO area to ensure that appropriate medical cover is provided.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Braham', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul Braham
Senior Operations Manager (Area DON)

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