



Ceann Seirbhíse, Míchumais  
Baile Átha Cliath Theas, Cill Dara & Iarthar  
Chill Mhantáin

Teach Darach, Páirc na Mílaoise, An Nás,  
Co. Chill Dara, W91 KDC

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**21 May 2024**

**Bernard J. Durkan TD**  
**Dáil Éireann**  
**Leinster House**  
**Kildare Street**  
**Dublin 2**

**Ref: PQ 19472/24**

**Re: Children's Disability Network Teams – Kildare & West Wicklow**

*“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the timeline for full reimplementation of services provided by the Kildare network disability team, with particular reference to the urgent provision of occupational therapy, speech therapy, clinical psychology and social worker services; the positions in this team currently vacant and yet to be filled; the timeline for filling such positions; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”*

**- Bernard J. Durkan**

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**Dear Deputy Durkan,**

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

I have requested the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT) for Kildare & West Wicklow to examine the matter and the following outlines the position.

CDNT – North Kildare:

The CDNTs in Kildare were established in 2014 and are implementing services based on the resource available. Staff movement and recruitment is ongoing with staff moving to internal promotional opportunities and moving to other geographical locations. Outlined in the table below is the current status regarding vacant posts and recruitment. Recruitment in CHO DSKWW for vacant posts has occurred nationally through recent National CDNT campaign and Internationally with the support of two recruitment agencies.

Discipline Grade	WTE	Date Vacant From	Recruitment Plan
Psychologist Staff Grade	1 WTE	<i>Jun-23</i>	Unable to fill expressed out 3 times
Psychologist Senior	.8 WTE	<i>Mar-24</i>	To be expressed out to Senior panel – have sought update from HR re time frame no response yet.
Occupational Therapist Clinical Specialist	.8 WTE	<i>Jun-24</i>	Advertised – closing date 9/5/2024
Senior Occupational Therapist	1 WTE	<i>Oct-24</i>	On maternity leave
Clinical Specialist Speech and Language Therapist	.8 WTE	<i>Jun-23</i>	Interviews took place 26/04/2024 – have sought update from HR re time frame
Senior Speech and Language Therapist	1 WTE	<i>Sep-23</i>	Interviews held awaiting HR to express to panel – have sought update from HR re time frame no response yet
Senior Speech and Language Therapist	1 WTE	<i>Sep-23</i>	Temporary assignment to more Senior post on another team - not possible to recruit backfill
Staff Grade Speech and Language Therapist	1 WTE	<i>Aug-23</i>	Accepted by international recruit in Aug 2023 – awaiting CORU registration to move to next phase of recruitment
Staff Grade Speech and Language Therapist	1 WTE	<i>Apr-24</i>	Awaiting approval to fill

CDNT – Mid Kildare:

Discipline Grade	WTE	Recruitment Plan
Occupational Therapist, Senior	1 WTE	Gone for shortlisting
Occupational Therapist, Senior	.3 WTE	Gone for shortlisting
Occupational Therapist, Staff Grade	1 WTE	Interviews 20th May
Psychologist Basic	2 WTE	Contract stage
Psychologist Basic	3 WTE	Contract stage
Psychologist Senior	4 WTE	Closing 20th May
Psychologist Senior	.8 WTE	Closing 20th May
Speech & Language Therapist, Staff Grade	1 WTE	Closed 09/05, 1 application
Speech & Language Therapist, Staff Grade	2 WTE	Contract stage
Speech & Language Therapist, Staff Grade	3 WTE	Gone for shortlisting

CDNT – South Kildare & West Wicklow:

The South Kildare West Wicklow Children's Disability Network (SKWW CDNT) has experienced significant recruitment challenges over the last few years, which has been reflected nationally as the national model of Progressing Disability services for Children has been rolled out.

KARE, as lead Agency for the South Kildare Childrens Disability Network team, has actively recruited to all vacancies as they arose, and were also utilising all possible opportunities including a multiagency, approach for international recruitment, to maintain services to children and families within the constraints experienced. We acknowledge that this has been difficult for all, both families and staff. Particular challenges that we experienced and continue to experience have been in the clinical disciplines of psychology, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. Regular updates in relation to changes in recruitment, both challenges and successes, are provided through the family forums which are held quarterly. Update to timelines regarding waitlists for clinical supports is available through direct contact with the Children's disability team manager.

The impact of these extended vacancies on our waitlist has been significant, and currently the waitlist time is approximately 24 months. The SKWW CDNT has continued to provide core services, has achieved their key target of Assessment of Need completed, and continuously review their waitlists regularly to expedite intake to services despite the vacancies experienced.

In response to your query, we are currently continuing to recruit both OT and SLT posts at present to fill vacancies. Overall, our recent recruitment is providing some successes. We have no psychology or social work vacancies. 2 additional therapy posts were filled in April, with 3 further therapy posts ( 2 SLT, 1 OT) offered or pending start dates later in 2024 through international recruitment. We have 1 nurse vacancy.

I trust this information is of use to you. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

P.P



Margaret O'Neill

**Interim Head of Service, Disability Services**

**Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare.**