



**Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Oibríochtaí**  
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10<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Ms. Violet-Anne Wynne, TD  
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Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

By email to: [violet-anne.wynne@oireachtas.ie](mailto:violet-anne.wynne@oireachtas.ie)

**Ref: PQ 4648/2024**

**To ask the Minister for Health if he will consider reinstating a director of mental health services; if not, the reason; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Wynne,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The HSE had in place a National Director for Mental Health for a number of years prior to 2018. In 2018 a decision was made as part of the process of developing revised organisational arrangements to reflect the introduction of three new senior HSE roles (Chief Operations Officer, Chief Strategy & Planning Officer and Chief Clinical Officer) to undertake a realignment process in the Corporate Centre. This resulted in the establishment of the Community Operations Division which has responsibility at a national level across care groups including Mental Health, Older Persons, Disability Services etc.

A review of the HSE Corporate Centre completed in 2021 found that an Integrated Operations function at national level is critical to ensuring that services are managed in an integrated way within identified geographies. In line with Government policy, the establishment of Health Regions will further support the integration of services at a local level to the benefit of our service users. This requires national leadership across our mental health services to ensure we can deliver the necessary improvements in service across the regions.

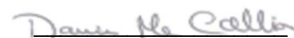
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At a national level, there is a national Mental Health Operations Lead and a National Clinical Lead for Mental Health focused primarily on adult services. The Operations and Clinical leads work closely together to provide leadership to the delivery system to ensure delivery of services in line with the National Service Plan and to implement policy in this area. Combining operational and clinical expertise provides the necessary leadership skills needed to deliver successful change.

In addition, the recognition of the need to strengthen the leadership and focus on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services is evidenced by the recent appointments of an Assistant National Director for Child and Youth Mental Health and a Clinical Lead for Child & Youth Mental Health. There are no plans at this time to create a National Director for Mental Health post in the HSE. I believe these recent appointments in senior leadership roles within mental health will further strengthen the national leadership across our mental health services.

I trust that this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

  
Damien McCallion  
Chief Operations Officer