



Office of the Head of Primary Care
Services
Community Health Organisation
Midlands Louth Meath

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28th November 2024

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 38952/24 - To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to urgently review and intervene to secure occupational therapy (OT) services in the south Louth Bettystown catchment, where there are presently over 600 children awaiting an OT assessment and with no paediatric occupational therapist staff presently employed in this network; if he will provide a mitigation plan to ensure that these ever-increasing numbers are catered for in neighbouring networks where services are available, or alternately, provide the services by contracting the private sector to cater for this unacceptable number of children awaiting treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter – Fergus O'Dowd

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

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 of Health for response. I have examined the matter and outlined the position as follows.

Since April 2022, 1.5 WTE Paediatric Occupational Therapist posts based in Boyne Primary Care Drogheda are vacant. A campaign was run but was unsuccessful in filling the posts. All vacancies are being reviewed in line with the new Pay and Numbers cap for the Regional Health Authority. Accordingly, it is not possible to estimate a timeframe for an appointment at this time.

The South Louth & Bettystown Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service has a waitlist of 687 children.

Assistance in relation to Urgent P1's is being provided by North Louth Network. The North Louth Team have also supported the Transition to Secondary School Group which supported 12 children.



I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Joseph Ruane', written in a cursive style.

Joseph Ruane
Head of Primary Care Services
Midlands Louth Meath Community Health Organisation