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27/05/2022

Ms Sarah Cremin,
Committee Secretariat,
Public Accounts Committee,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Re: Ref (S0867 PAC33)

Dear Ms Cremin,

I refer to your recent correspondence to Mr. Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, Health Service Executive, regarding the alleged financial irregularities at Autism Initiatives Ireland.

The HSE is not aware of any concern in respect of Autism Initiatives being reported to the Garda National Economic Bureau, or of any investigation by An Garda Síochána in to any matters in the organisation.

The Charities Regulator also received a copy of the original concern following which the Regulator contacted the National Disability Operations Office in March 2021, to confirm that Autism Initiatives had satisfied the Charities Regulator in respect of necessary changes to governance structure, and as such their involvement with the agency was now concluded.

The HSE, through the CHOs who fund services in Autism Initiatives, continues to have ongoing monitoring and oversight in respect of the Service Arrangement between Autism Initiatives Ireland and the HSE, and we are not aware of any matters of concern being reported from the CHOs to National Community Operations.

All providers, including Autism Initiatives Ireland, contracted to provide health and social care supports and services on behalf of the HSE are required to enter into an agreed service arrangement. Part 1 of this agreement necessitates strict adherence in respect of clauses associated with overall governance of the organisation, financial controls in respect of the use of funds provided by the State and which is specifically to provide the referred to supports and services.

Additionally, each provider, including Autism Initiatives Ireland, must provide an Annual Compliance Statement as well as an Annual Financial Monitoring Return which is subject to oversight and monitoring.

If any further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Ray Mitchell
Assistant National Director
Parliamentary Affairs Division