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16/02/2023

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

Re: Ref (S1175 PAC33)

Dear Ms Cremin,

I refer to your recent correspondence to Mr. Stephen Mulvany, Chief Executive Officer, Health Service Executive, regarding the funding of the Transgender Equality Network of Ireland (TENI).

Please find below for the attention of the Public Accounts Committee members a briefing note on this matter as requested.

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

Yours sincerely,

Ray Mitchell
Assistant National Director
Parliamentary Affairs Division

Briefing Note for the Public Accounts Committee on TENI

TENI - Transgender Equality Network of Ireland:

In 2022, TENI received €159,000 in funding from the HSE.

- €79,000 from the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP).
- €80,000 from National Office for Social Inclusion

TENI delivers the Transgender Health and Suicide Prevention programme. The HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention and HSE National Office for Social Inclusion support this initiative. This holistic programme combines a top-down strategic approach to the training of health professionals with bottom-up community development among members of the Trans community and their families. It aims to ensure that Trans people's health and wellbeing are integrated into all national and regional health services to ensure that Trans people can access high quality support throughout Ireland.

HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention funding to TENI is in alignment with objectives and actions in Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide – in which members of the LGBTI+ community are identified as requiring targeted and priority actions. The HSE is committed to the implementation of Connecting for Life – and reducing suicide in Ireland - in partnership with multiple lead agencies across our health services, Government and the community/NGO sector.

Services offered as part of the Transgender Health and Suicide Prevention programme **comprise of**

- Family Support: this includes support groups and a family support line as well as support to individuals and on request to schools and service providers.
- Community Support: this includes support groups and individual support.
- Training programmes for service providers: this includes healthcare supports, individual supports and training for healthcare providers. Training includes Trans Awareness in a Healthcare Setting, Trans Mental Health, Sexual Health Care and training for GPs

HSE Monitoring of Service Level Agreement (SLA) and governance requirements:

During the course of 2021 and 2022, a number of governance and compliance issues were identified which breached TENI's Service Level Agreements with the HSE. These included non-adherence to timelines and requirements for financial reporting as per their Service Level Agreements, failure to submit audited accounts for 2019 and 2020 and to recruit a CEO.

As a result, from 1 April 2022 to 31 May funding to TENI was suspended. The HSE met with TENI on 16 June 2022 at this stage they had successfully recruited a new CEO and were due to appoint a new Chair of the Board. Documentation (including audited accounts) were submitted to the satisfaction of the HSE. It was agreed that funding would be reinstated. Bi-monthly meetings continued to monitor progress.

In Q3 2022, TENI's signed Annual Accounts for 2021 failed to be filed. As a result, no payment was made on 1 October 2022 and an urgent meeting between the HSE and TENI was called.

On 21 October 2022, TENI provided the signed Annual Financial Statement and a plan for the review of organisational governance, particularly in regard to financial governance. All documentation was reviewed by the HSE and a decision was made to reinstate funding in November 2022.

The HSE will continue to monitor TENI's compliance with financial reporting requirements, quarterly reporting of service activity and will schedule Service Level Agreement meetings to take place quarterly.

**HSE National Office of Suicide Prevention (NOSP)
February 2023**