



Deputy Johnny Guirke
Leinster House Office,
Kildare St.
Dublin 2

8th August 2025

johnny.guirke@oireachtas.ie

Ref: PQ 39317/25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality her Department's engagement with the Department of Health regarding delays in CAMHS access and the impact on the welfare of vulnerable children; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Guirke,

I refer to the parliamentary question above and apologise for the delay in responding to you.

My Department is committed to engaging with the Department of Health on issues which may impact on the welfare of vulnerable children.

The General Scheme of the Child Care (Amendment) Bill 2023 contained proposals relating to interagency cooperation, including the proposed establishment of a statutory committee. These provisions envisioned that such a Committee would provide an effective mechanism for all relevant Government Departments and State agencies, including the Department of Health, who deliver services to families and children (in care and in aftercare) or known to Tusla.

In advance of any such statutory amendment, my Department has established an Interagency Group on Vulnerable Children on an administrative basis. The Interagency Group is tasked with identifying issues impacting on children in care or who are known to Tusla, with particular regard to the provision of services across Government to this cohort of vulnerable children.

The first meeting of the Group took place on 28th March 2024. The Group's initial focus to date has been on children in care or known to Tusla with especially complex needs, including for disability, mental health and addiction services. Consequently, the Group has been attended by a number of Departments and Agencies, including my Department and the Department of Health. The Group most recently met on 8th May 2025 and continued to consider the delivery of services to this specific cohort of vulnerable children.



The Children and Young People's Policy Forum is a cross-government mechanism for communication between senior officials and agency representatives for communication between senior officials and agency representatives, and representatives from the Young Ireland Advisory Council. At the group's meeting in December 2024, plans for the HSE Child and Youth Mental Health office were outlined.

As part of the governance and implementation of Young Ireland, officials in the Department of Health have also met with the Young Ireland Advisory Council to discuss challenges in relation to child and youth mental health. The Young Ireland Advisory Council forms a core part of the governance structures of Young Ireland and provides a forum for the community and voluntary sector and independent experts to advise and support the development and implementation of policies in respect of children and young people.

I hope that this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Norma Foley', is written over a horizontal line.

Norma Foley TD.

Minister for Department of Children, Disability and Equality