

# TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

# Quarterly Service Performance and Activity Report

QUARTER 3 2017



Quality Assurance Directorate

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## 1.0 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

This report provides an update on the performance and activity of Tusla services at the end of Q3 2017. It is structured around key performance and activity measures included in the Agency's 2017 Business Plan. The data presented was provided by services and refers to the latest performance and activity information available at this time. **These data can change from data previously published due to the ongoing validation of data.**

The summary by service type set out below provides an overview of the Q3 2017 position regarding activity and performance.

### CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE SERVICES

#### Referrals

- 14,263 referrals for Q2 2017; 634 (5%) more than Q1 and the highest number for the period Q1 2014 – Q2 2017.
- 65% (n=9,264) for child welfare concerns; 1,093 (13%) more than Q1
- 35% (n=4,999) for child abuse concerns; 459 (8%) fewer than Q1
- 34% (n=4,758) of referrals required an initial assessment; down six percentage points on Q1 and the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017

#### Social Work Activity Data

- 25,919 cases open to social work at the end of Q3 2017; 53 more than Q2 2017
- 80% (n=20,635) of open cases allocated to named social worker; up from 77% (19,973) at the end of Q2 2017
- 5,284 cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017; 609 (10%) fewer than Q2 2017; nearly one-third (n=1,507) "active" on a duty system i.e., actions being taken to progress the case
- 18% (n=966) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were categorised as 'high priority'; down 25 (7%) from Q2 2017
- 63% (n=609) of 'high priority' cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were waiting less than 3 months.

#### Child Protection Notification System

- 1,402 children listed as 'active' on the CPNS at the end of Q3 2017; 46 more than Q2 2017. Highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q3 2017.
- All but two children listed as "active" at the end of Q2 2017 had an allocated social worker.

### **Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service / Crisis Intervention Service**

- 234 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)<sup>1</sup> during Q3 2017; 23 more than Q2
- 83 children were placed with the CIS during Q3 2017; 20 more than Q2
- 181 referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS) (includes service operating in Cork) during Q3 2017; 71 fewer than Q2 2017
- 67 children were placed during Q3 2017, 25 fewer than Q2

## **ALTERNATIVE CARE SERVICES**

### **Children in Care**

- 6,230 children in care at the end of Q3 2017, down 67 from Q2 2017 and 78 from Q1 2017
- 600 children in private placements, down 16 from Q2 2017
- 95% (n=5,916) of children in care had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%); no change from Q2 2017
- 314 children awaiting allocation of a social worker; 21 more than Q2 2017
- 93% (n=5,802) of children in care had an up to date care plan (against a target of 90%); down one percentage point from Q2 2017
- A total of 428 children without an up-to-date care plan, 46 more than Q2 2017

### **Aftercare**

- 1,989 young adults (all ages) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q3 2017; 7 fewer than Q2
- 86% (n=1,638/1,914) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an allocated aftercare worker; no change from Q2 2017
- 84% (n=1,608/1,914) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an aftercare plan; up two percentage points on Q2 2017
- 157 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years; 388 discharged 2017 YTD. 85% (n=134) had an allocated aftercare worker, up one percentage points on Q2 2017

### Adoption

- 189 new applications to commence tracing for a searched person in Q3 2017; 755 received 2017 YTD
- 828 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q3 2017; up 74 on Q2
- All but one service meeting the target of eight weeks or less from time of application to provision of non-identifying information
- 41 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received in Q3 2017; 138 received 2017 YTD
- 49 new children were referred for adoption in Q3 2017; 142 referred 2017 YTD
- 34 completed adoption assessments presented to Local Adoption Committees in Q3 2017 ; 109 presented 2017 YTD

### Foster Carers

- 4,443 foster carers on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q3 2017; eight more than Q2 but 80 fewer than Q3 2016
- 79% (n=1,171/1,473) of relative foster carers approved against a target of 80%
- 92% (n=2,571) of general foster carers had an allocated link (target 90%), up two percentage points on Q2. A total of 235 awaiting, 59 fewer than Q2 2017
- 88% (n=1,034) of approved relative foster carers had an allocated link worker (target of 85%), up one percentage point on Q2. Total of 137 awaiting allocation, 22 fewer than Q2 2017
- 302 unapproved relative foster carers, nine fewer than Q2 2017
- 258 (85%) of the unapproved relative foster carers had a child placed with them for longer than 12 weeks; 13 fewer than Q2 2017
- 80% (n=207) of unapproved relative foster carers with a child placed > 12 weeks had an allocated link (social) worker; 51 awaiting allocation, 17 fewer than Q2 2017

## REGULATION & SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### Early Years Services

- 4,501 EYS on the register nationally at the end of Q3 2017; 33 more than Q2 2017
- 550 EYS inspections (all types) carried out during Q3 2017; 79 (17%) more than Q2 2017
- 54 complaints received in respect of EYS during Q3 2017; 44 fewer than Q2 2017

## **Alternative Education Regulation**

### **Home Education**

- 1,400 children on the register for home education at the end of Q3 2017
- 167 applications for home education during Q2 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 413
- 236 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q3 2017; 76 more than Q2
- 745 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q3 2017; 33 fewer than Q2

### **Independent Schools**

- 4,825 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q3 2017
- 24 children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 307
- 44 children registered during Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,078
- 936 children awaiting registration at the end of Q3 2017; 27 fewer than Q2

## **Non-Statutory Alternative Care Services**

- 115 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q3 2017
- 19 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 70
- 6 non statutory foster care services at the end of Q3 2017

## **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Family Support Services (data provisional)**

- At least 21,575 children in receipt of family support services at the end of June 2017
- At least 17,580 children referred to family support services between January and June 2017
- 72% (12,708) of children referred to family support services (Jan – Jun 2017) received a service

### **Meitheal and Child & Family Support Networks**

- 804 Meitheal processes requested January – June 2017
- 46% (369) requested through Direct Access and 45% (362) requested through Social Work Diversion
- 53% (423) of Meitheal processes requested January – June 2017 proceeded to Stage 2 (Discussion Stage)
- 380 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage 2 between January – June 2017; 72% (272) of these proceeded to Stage 3 (Delivery)
- 473 Meitheal processes were closed January to June 2017; 54% (253) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form; 18% (87) closed following completion of Stage 2; 9% (41) closed following commencement of Stage 3 and 19% (92) closed post- delivery.
- 88 Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN) operating at the end of June 2017, with a further 53 planned.

## EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES

### Educational Welfare Services

- 3,522 new individual children worked with in the academic 2016/2017
- 960 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Sept 2017; 201 fewer than August 2017
- 721 school attendance notices (SANs) issued in respect of 485 children under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000<sup>1</sup>, in the academic 2016/2017
- 156 summonses issued in respect of 109 children under Section 25 of the Act, in the academic 2016/2017
- 216 Section 24 meetings convened by EWOs, in the academic 2016/2017

## HUMAN RESOURCES OVERVIEW

### Human Resources

- 3,644 (WTE) employed by the Agency at the end of Q3 2017; 7 more than Q2 2017 and 89 more than Q3 2016
- 294 new staff came on to the Agency's payroll (Jan - Sept 2017)
- 254 staff left (incl. retirements) the Agency (Jan - Sept 2017)
- 127 staff on maternity leave (incl. 39 unpaid) at the end of Sept 2017
- 451 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of Sept 2017
- 5.21% absence rate (Aug 2017); 0.64 percentage points higher than Q2 2017
- 82 courses run by Workforce Learning and Development in Q3 2017; 930 attendees

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

### Finance

- The financial outturn for the year to date (Sept 2017) is an over-spend of €8.085 million
- Pay costs are over-spent against budget by €1.117 million
- Non pay costs are over-spent against budget by €8.236 million
- Key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €8.183 million over budget
- 41% (€9.791 million) of legal expenditure year to date on guardians ad litem (GALs), including GAL's solicitors and counsel.

## 2.0 CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE SERVICES

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- 2.1 Referrals (child welfare and child abuse)
- 2.2 Social Work Activity Data
- 2.3 Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
- 2.4 Crisis Intervention Service / Out of Hours Service

### 2.1 REFERRALS (CHILD WELFARE AND CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT)

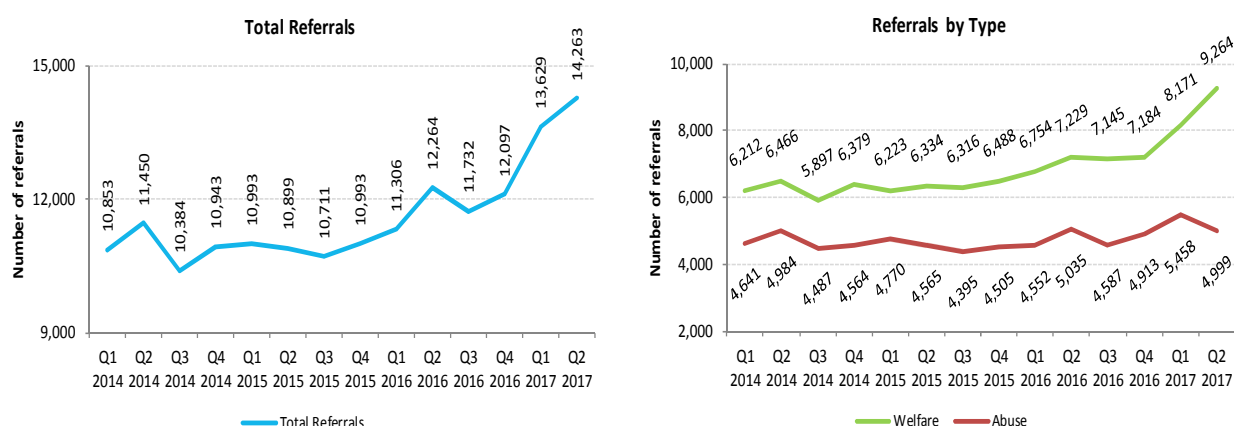
#### Key Facts

- 14,263 referrals for Q2 2017; 634 (5%) more than Q1 and the highest number for the period Q1 2014 – Q2 2017.
- 65% (n=9,264) for child welfare concerns; 1,093 (13%) more than Q1
- 35% (n=4,999) for child abuse concerns; 459 (8%) fewer than Q1
- 34% (n=4,758) of referrals required an initial assessment; down six percentage points on Q1 and the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017

#### Number of Referrals

- 14,263 referrals to Child Protection and Welfare Service during Q2 2017<sup>1</sup>; 634 (5%) more than Q1 2017 and the highest number for the period Q1 2014 – Q2 2017 (Fig. 1). This brings to 27,892 the number of referrals for the first six months of 2017, some 4,322 (18%) more than the first six months of 2016.
- 65% (n=9,264) of referrals for Q2 2017 were for child welfare concerns; 1,093 (13%) more than Q1 2017. The remaining 35% (n=4,999) were for child abuse/neglect concerns; 459 (8%) fewer than Q1 2017.

Figure 1: Number of referrals (child welfare and abuse/neglect) by quarter

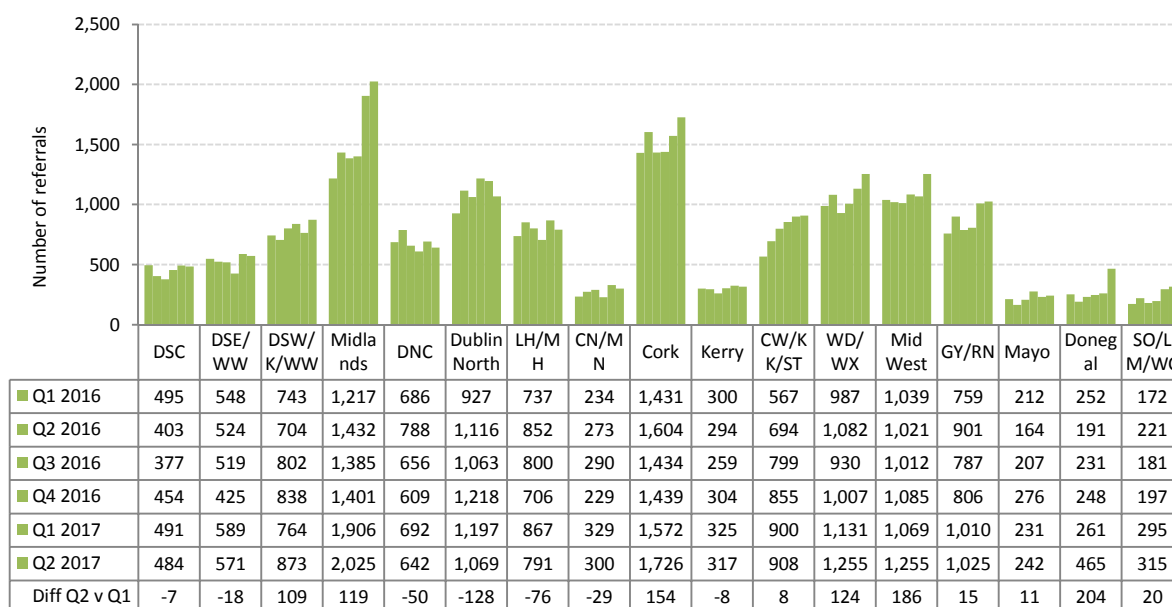


<sup>1</sup> Data on referrals are reported quarterly in arrears.

## Referrals by Area

- Six areas (Midlands, Dublin North, Cork, Waterford/Wexford, MidWest and Galway/Roscommon) reported in excess of 1,000 referrals in Q2 2017 with a further five areas reporting between 500 and 1,000 referrals (Figure 2).
- 10 areas reported an increase in referrals from Q1 2017, ranging from 204 (Donegal) to eight (CW/KK/ST).
- 7 areas reported a decrease ranging from 128 (Dublin North) to seven (Dublin South Central).

Figure 2: Referrals by area Q1 2016 – Q2 2017



## Rate of Referrals Q2 2017

- 14,263 referrals equates to about 12 referrals per 1,000 population under 18 years. *It should be noted that more than one referral can be received in relation to a child (i.e., for separate incidents) and as a result the number of children involved is likely to be fewer than the number of referrals.*
- Midlands area reported the highest rate of referrals at 25/1,000 children, more than double the national rate, followed by WD/WX (18/1,000) (Table 1). The lowest rate was reported by Dublin South Central and Dublin South East/Wicklow (7/1,000 children).
- Eight areas (Midlands, Dublin North City, Cork, CW/KK/ST, WD/WX, MidWest, GY/RN and SLWC) reported a rate higher than the national rate of 12/1,000 population under 18 years.

Table 1: Rate of referrals

| Area     | Referrals Q2 2017 | Population 0-17 years* | Rate / 1,000 population 0 – 17 years |
|----------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| DSC      | 484               | 65,564                 | 7                                    |
| DSE/WW   | 571               | 86,810                 | 7                                    |
| DSW/K/WW | 873               | 108,186                | 8                                    |

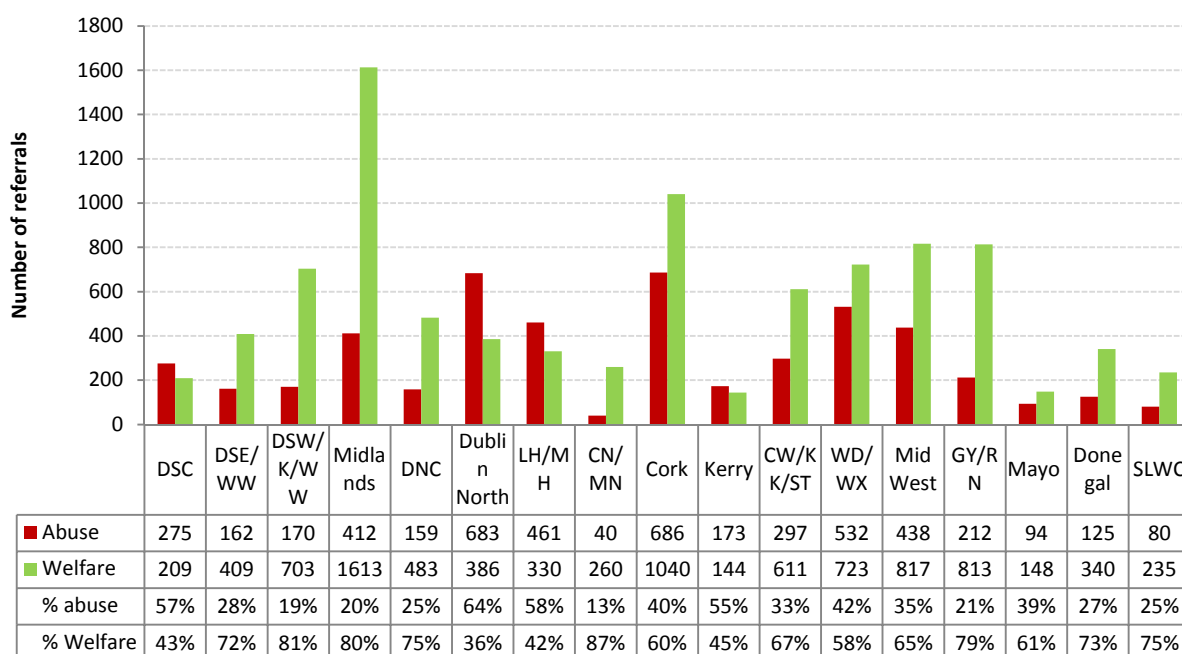
|                 |               |                  |           |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------|
| Midlands        | 2,025         | 80,193           | 25        |
| DNC             | 642           | 44,927           | 14        |
| Dublin North    | 1,069         | 100,654          | 11        |
| LH/MH           | 791           | 93,093           | 8         |
| CN/MN           | 300           | 36,446           | 8         |
| Cork            | 1,726         | 134,015          | 13        |
| Kerry           | 317           | 34,527           | 9         |
| CW/KK/ST        | 908           | 63,009           | 14        |
| WD/WX           | 1,255         | 68,513           | 18        |
| MidWest         | 1,255         | 96,266           | 13        |
| GY/RN           | 1,025         | 79,912           | 13        |
| Mayo            | 242           | 31,968           | 8         |
| Donegal         | 465           | 42,865           | 11        |
| SLWC            | 315           | 23,554           | 13        |
| <b>National</b> | <b>14,263</b> | <b>1,190,502</b> | <b>12</b> |

\*CSO Census 2016

### Referrals by Area and Type, Q2 2017

- An area breakdown of referrals by type (abuse / welfare) for Q2 2017 is presented in the chart below (Figure 3).
- Nationally, there was 35:65 split between referrals of abuse/neglect and welfare. This varied across the areas and ranged from a 64:36 split for Dublin North to a 13:87 split for Cavan/Monaghan. Seven areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 35% for abuse.

Figure 3: Breakdown of referrals by type and area

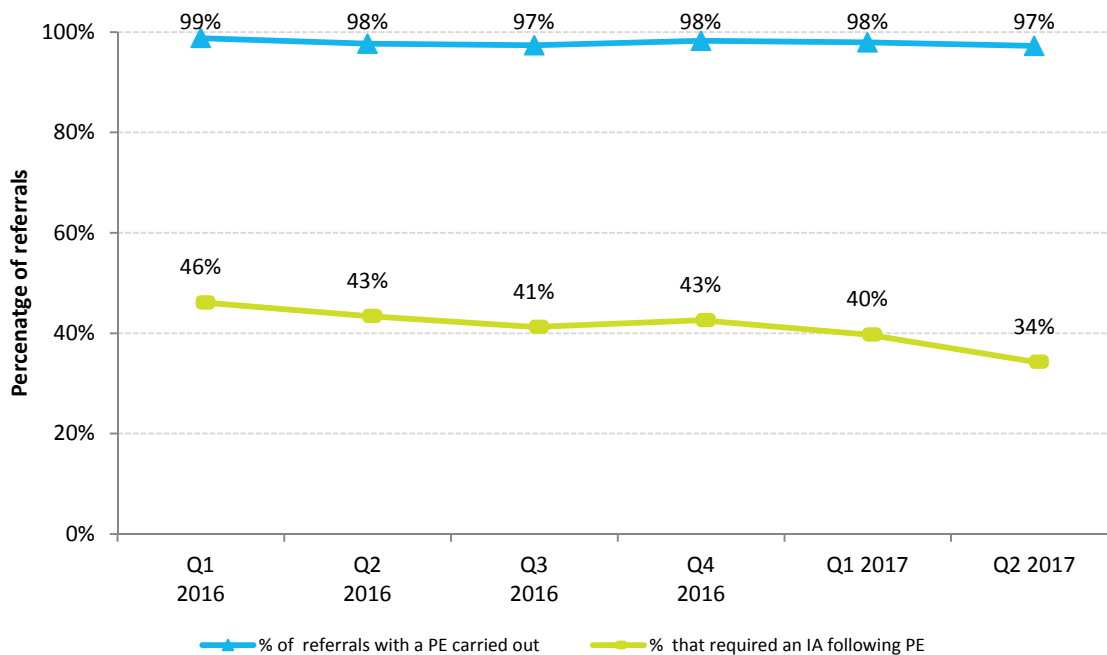


- 97% (n=13,866) of referrals for Q2 2017 had a preliminary enquiry<sup>2</sup> carried out; down one percentage point from Q1 2017 (Figure 4).

<sup>2</sup> The preliminary enquiries step is concerned with substantiating the details provided by the reporter e.g. verify reporters phone number, child's address, concern, check if the child is already known to the service, other network

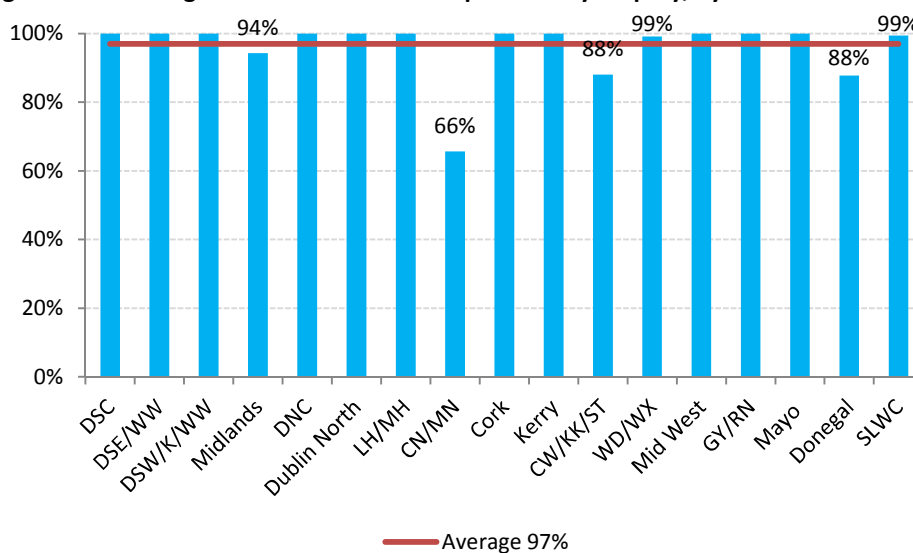
- 34% (n=4,758) of referrals that had a preliminary enquiry required an initial assessment<sup>3</sup>; down six percentage points from Q1 2017 and the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017.

**Figure 4: Percentage of preliminary enquiries and initial assessments carried out**



- A preliminary enquiry was carried out on all referrals (Q2 2017) in 11 areas (Figure 5). The percentage reported for CN/MN (66%) is significantly lower than all other areas.

**Figure 5: Percentage of referrals that had a preliminary enquiry, by area**

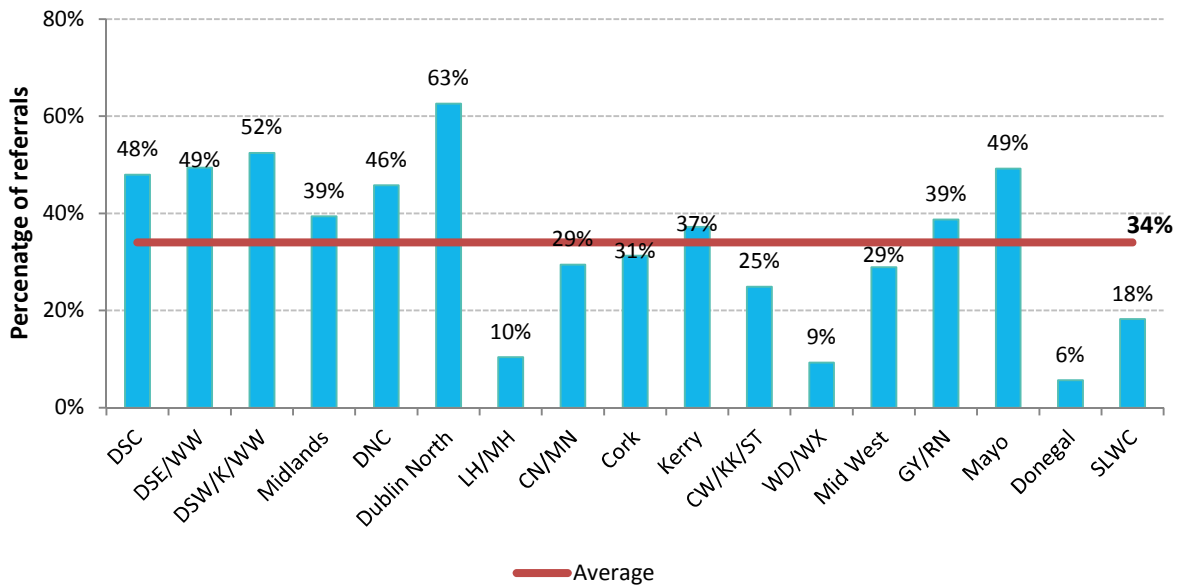


checks etc. A preliminary enquiry is not an assessment. The aim of the preliminary enquiry process is to support and help the user (the social worker) to make a decision on the action to take in response to the information reported, that will result in the best outcome for the child who is the subject of the referral. Preliminary enquiries should normally be completed within 24 hours.

<sup>3</sup> Initial assessment is a time-limited process to allow the gathering of sufficient information on the needs and risks within a case so that informed decisions and recommendations can be made and actions that will result in better outcomes for children taken. Initial Assessments should normally be completed in 21 days or less.

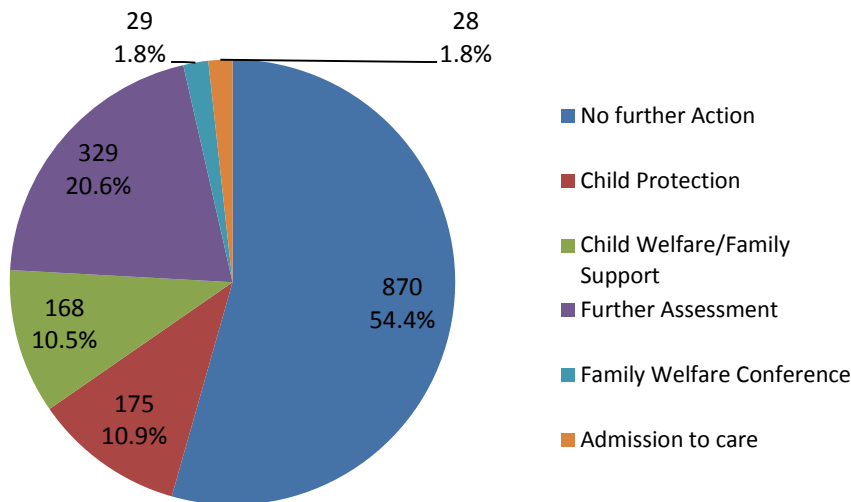
- The percentage of referrals requiring an initial assessment following a preliminary enquiry ranged from 63% in Dublin North to 6% in Donegal (Figure 6). Eight areas reported a percentage below the national average of 34%.

**Figure 6: Percentage of referrals requiring an IA following a preliminary enquiry**



- The outcome of initial assessment was recorded for 1,599 referrals (Q2 2017) (Figure 7)
- 'No further action' was recorded in the majority (54%; n=870) of cases.
- Admission to care was recorded for 1.8% (n=28) of cases and 'child protection<sup>4</sup>' was recorded for 11% (n=175) cases.

**Figure 7: Breakdown of actions recorded following initial assessment**



<sup>4</sup> A child protection conference is requested for child(ren) who require a child protection response, as they have been assessed as being at ongoing risk of significant harm. A child protection plan is developed at the conference to safeguard the child(ren) identified as being at risk. Whereas children may suffer harm for a range of reasons, for the purpose of the child protection conference and the CPNS, the threshold of ongoing risk of significant harm is confined to abuse, including neglect, attributable to inappropriate or inadequate care from parent/s.

## 2.2 SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITY DATA (Child Protection & Welfare)

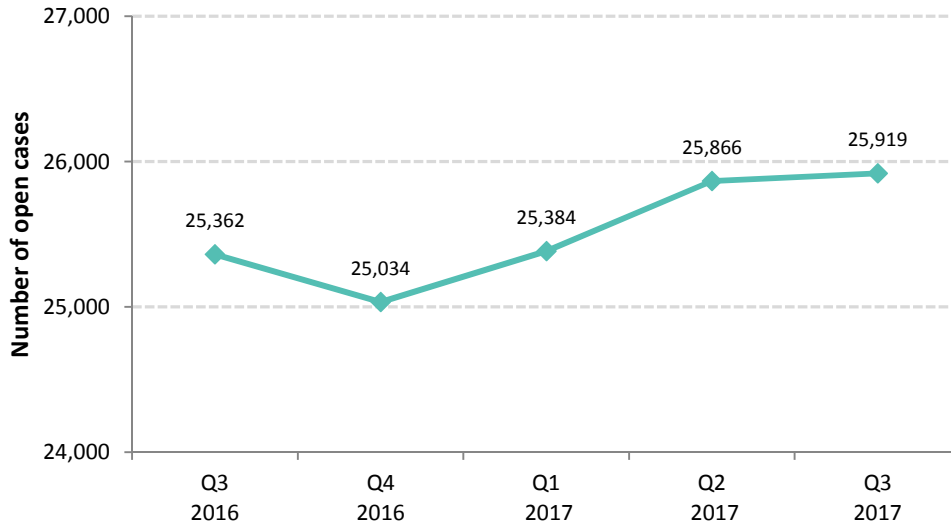
### Key Facts

- 25,919 cases open to social work at the end of Q3 2017; 53 more than Q2 2017
- 80% (n=20,635) of open cases allocated to named social worker; up from 77% (19,973) at the end of Q2 2017
- 5,284 cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017; 609 (10%) fewer than Q2 2017; nearly one-third (n=1,507) “active” on a duty system i.e., actions being taken to progress the case
- 18% (n=966) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were categorised as ‘high priority’; down 25 (7%) from Q2 2017
- 63% (n=609) of ‘high priority’ cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were waiting less than 3 months.

### 2.2.1 Open Cases

- 25,919 cases open<sup>5</sup> to social work nationally at the end of Q3 2017; 53 more than Q2 2017 and the highest number open for the period Q3 2016 – Q3 2017 (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Number of open cases by quarter

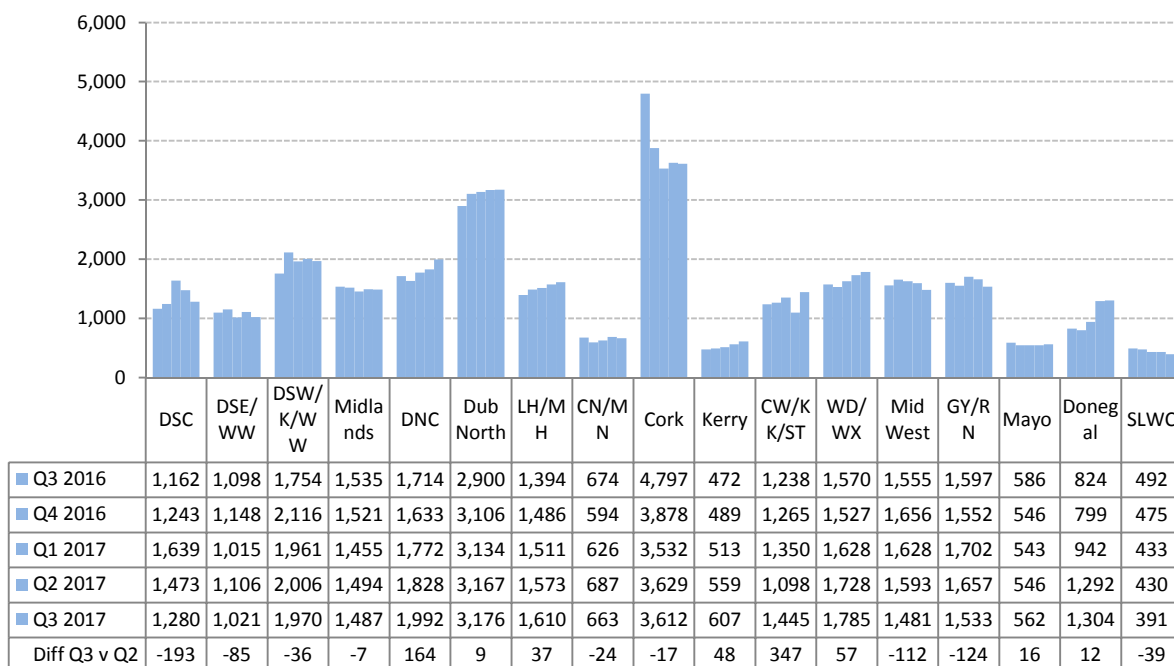


- The number of open cases ranged from 3,612 (14%) in Cork to 391 (less than 2%) in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan (Figure 9) with an average of 1,525 per area. Eleven of the 17 areas had between 1,000 and 2,000 cases; four areas have fewer than 1,000 cases while the remaining two areas (Cork and Dublin North) had in excess of 3,000 cases.
- Eight areas reported an increase in open cases from Q2 2017. The highest increase was reported by CW/KK/ST (n=347), followed by Dublin North City (n=164) and WD/WX (n=57).

<sup>5</sup> Open cases include cases held on intake, allocated, unallocated child welfare and protection and children in care cases.

- Dublin South Central reported the highest decrease (n=193) followed by GY/RN (n=124) and MidWest (n= 112).

**Figure 9: Number of open cases by area**

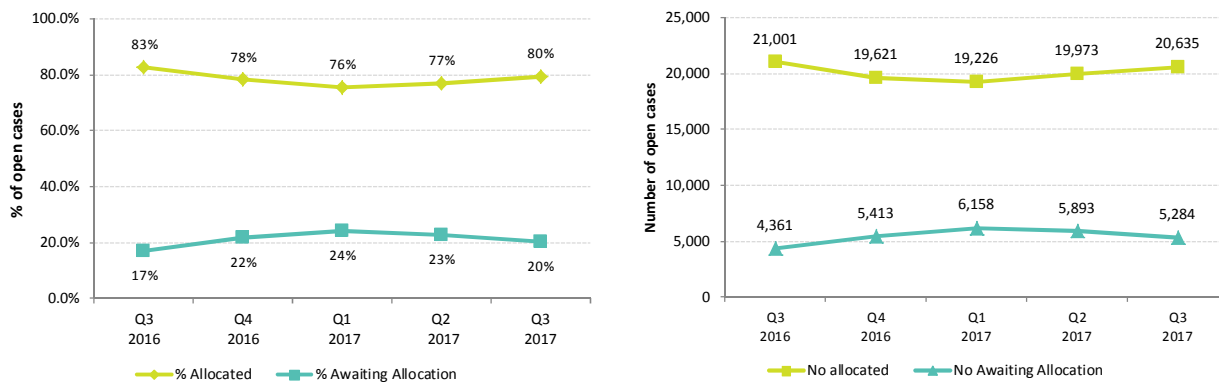


## 2.2.2 Open Cases Allocated / Awaiting Allocation

- 80% (n=20,635/25,919) of open cases were allocated to a named social worker at the end of Q3 2017; up three percentage points from Q2 2017 (Figure 10).
- 5,284 (20%) cases were awaiting allocation; 609 (10%) fewer than Q2 2017 (n=5,893). Nearly one-third (29%; n=1,507) of cases awaiting were “active” on a duty system<sup>6</sup>.

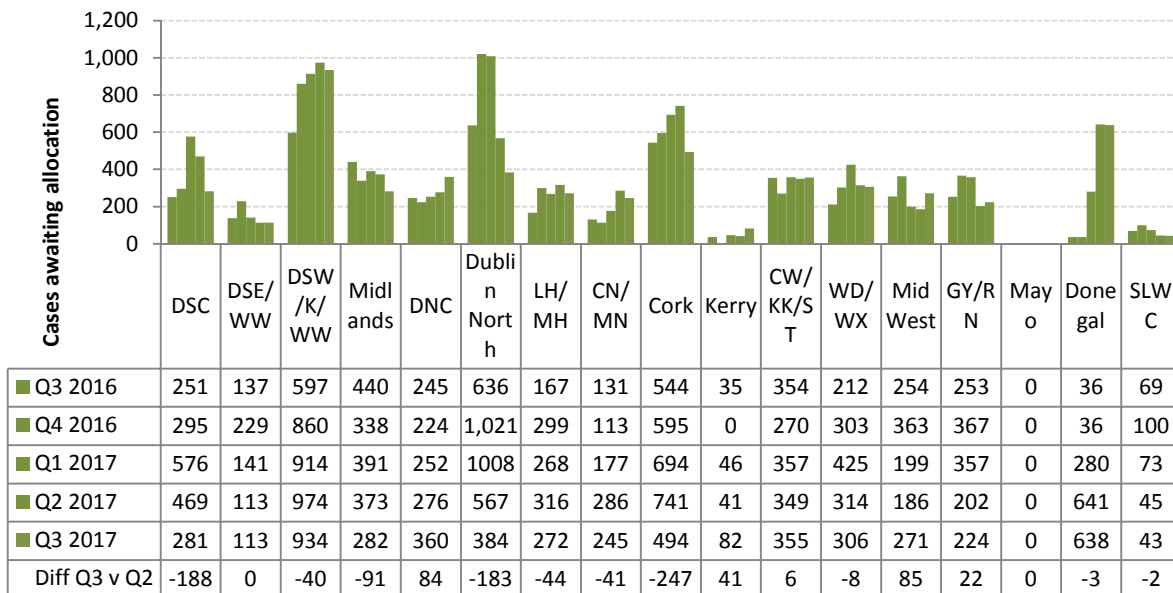
<sup>6</sup> A case awaiting allocation may be “active” on a “duty” system. This means that there are actions being undertaken by a dedicated duty team or rotating social workers on a duty roster to progress the protection and welfare of the child. Examples of actions being undertaken include telephone calls relating to the concern, visits to see children, completing initial assessments and child in care reviews or care plans. The actions undertaken must have occurred within the monthly MTP reporting period. There must be evidence of actions progressing the protection and welfare of the child and not simply a management review of a file. These cases will form a separate category on the MTP returns template under cases awaiting allocation.

**Figure 10: Cases allocated/awaiting allocation**



- DSW/K/WW (n=934) reported the highest number of cases awaiting allocation followed by Donegal (n=638) and Cork (n=494) (Figure 11).
- Ten areas reported a decrease from Q2 2017 in the number of cases awaiting allocation (Figure 11). Cork reported the highest decrease (n=247; 33%) followed by Dublin South Central (n=188; 40%) and Dublin North (n=183; 32%).
- Five areas reported an increase from Q2 2017. The highest increase was reported by MidWest (n=85) followed by Dublin North City (n=84); Kerry (n=41); GY/RN (n=22); and CW/KK/ST (n=6).
- Mayo reported no case awaiting allocation for the fifth consecutive quarter.

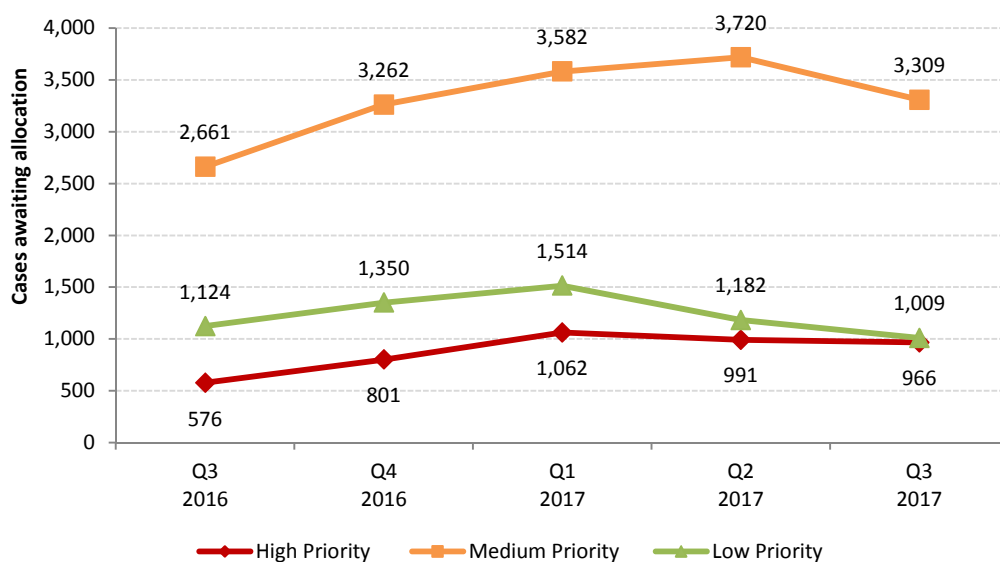
**Figure 11: Number of open cases awaiting allocation by area**



### 2.2.3 Cases Awaiting Allocation by Priority Level<sup>7</sup>

- 18% (n=966) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were categorised as ‘high priority’; down 25 from Q2 2017 (Figure 12).
- 63% of cases (n=3,309) awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were categorised as ‘medium priority’, down 411 (11%) on Q2 2017 while the remaining 19% (n=1,009) were categorised as ‘low priority’; down 173 (17%) on Q2 2017.

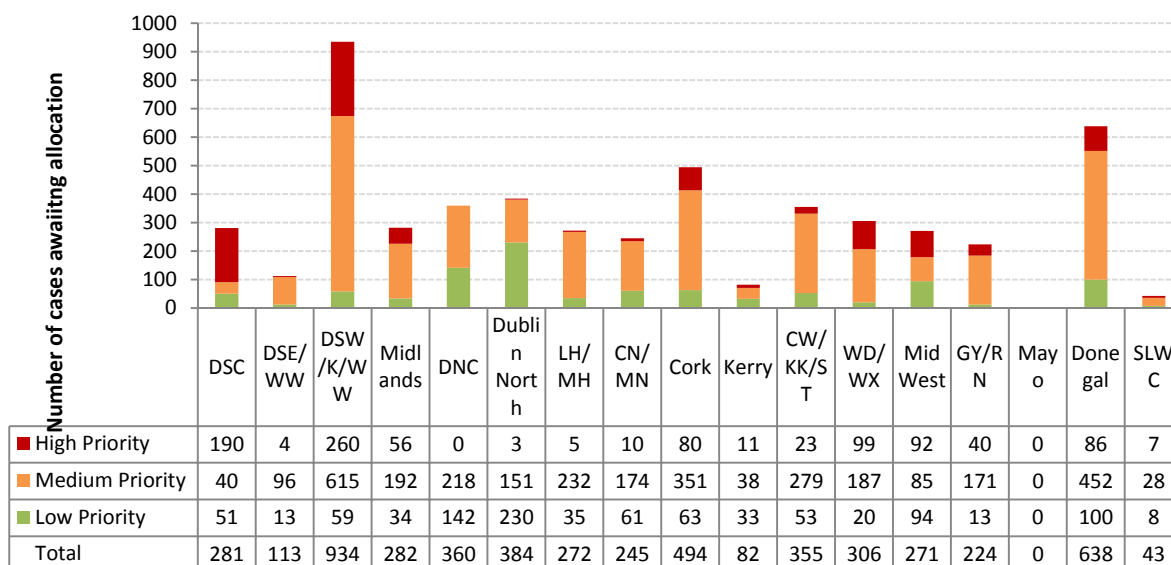
Figure 12: Cases awaiting allocation by priority level



- Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow reported the highest number (n=260) of ‘high priority’ cases awaiting allocation, followed by DSC (n=190); WD/WX (n=99) and MidWest (n=92) (Figure 13).
- Dublin North City reported no ‘high priority’ cases awaiting allocation while Mayo reported no cases awaiting allocation.
- More than two-thirds of the cases awaiting allocation in Dublin South Central (68%; 190/281) are categorised as ‘high priority’ cases.

<sup>7</sup> The priority level as per the guidance outlined in ‘Measuring the Pressure’ V2. Note: The priority levels in this guidance are currently under national review to ensure that the priority levels identified equate with categorisation of risk. A recent national review highlighted cases being categorised in accordance with actual risk rather than the priority levels in the “Measuring the Pressure” V2.

Figure 13: Area breakdown of cases awaiting allocation by priority level, Q3 2017



## 2.2.4 Cases Awaiting Allocation by Waiting Time

- 63% (n=609) of cases categorised as ‘high priority’ awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were waiting less than 3 months (Table 2). The number of ‘high priority’ cases waiting over 3 months (n=357) decreased by 69 between Q2 2017 and Q3 2017.
- 53% (n=1,742) of cases categorised as ‘medium priority’ were waiting less than 3 months at the end of Q3 2017. The number of ‘medium priority’ cases waiting over 3 months (n=1,567) for allocation decreased by 92 between Q2 2017 and Q3 2017 (Table 2).
- 43% (n=436) of cases categorised as ‘low priority’ were waiting less than 3 months at the end of Q3 2017. The number of ‘low priority’ cases waiting over 3 months (n=573) for allocation increased by 20 between Q2 2017 and Q3 2017 (Table 2).
- Majority (53%; n=2,787) of all cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q3 2017 were waiting less than 3 months.

**Table 2: Breakdown of cases awaiting allocation by priority level and time waiting**

| High Priority / Time Waiting   | Q3 2016      | Q4 2016      | Q1 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017 Cumulative % | Δ (+/-) Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 week                         | 71           | 79           | 54           | 137          | 81           | 8%                   | -56                       |
| 1-2 weeks                      | 41           | 79           | 96           | 20           | 104          | 11%                  | 84                        |
| 2-3 weeks                      | 25           | 80           | 97           | 64           | 82           | 8%                   | 18                        |
| 3-4 weeks                      | 43           | 69           | 124          | 93           | 100          | 10%                  | 7                         |
| 1-2 months                     | 104          | 116          | 160          | 152          | 122          | 13%                  | -30                       |
| 2-3 months                     | 78           | 94           | 95           | 99           | 120          | 12%                  | 21                        |
| >3 months                      | 214          | 284          | 436          | 426          | 357          | 37%                  | -69                       |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>576</b>   | <b>801</b>   | <b>1,062</b> | <b>991</b>   | <b>966</b>   | <b>100%</b>          | <b>-25</b>                |
| Medium Priority / Time Waiting | Q3 2016      | Q4 2016      | Q1 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017 Cumulative % | Δ (+/-) Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
| 1 week                         | 403          | 247          | 342          | 208          | 176          | 5%                   | -32                       |
| 1-2 weeks                      | 226          | 350          | 290          | 249          | 272          | 8%                   | 23                        |
| 2-3 weeks                      | 227          | 232          | 284          | 250          | 206          | 6%                   | -44                       |
| 3-4 weeks                      | 113          | 275          | 283          | 218          | 277          | 8%                   | 59                        |
| 1-2 months                     | 290          | 574          | 619          | 682          | 474          | 14%                  | -208                      |
| 2-3 months                     | 192          | 434          | 285          | 454          | 337          | 10%                  | -117                      |
| >3 months                      | 1,210        | 1,150        | 1,479        | 1,659        | 1,567        | 47%                  | -92                       |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>2,661</b> | <b>3,262</b> | <b>3,582</b> | <b>3,720</b> | <b>3,309</b> | <b>100%</b>          | <b>-411</b>               |
| Low Priority / Time Waiting    | Q3 2016      | Q4 2016      | Q1 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017 Cumulative % | Δ (+/-) Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
| 1 week                         | 161          | 65           | 49           | 75           | 45           | 4%                   | -30                       |
| 1-2 weeks                      | 58           | 91           | 80           | 54           | 62           | 6%                   | 8                         |
| 2-3 weeks                      | 82           | 48           | 146          | 44           | 57           | 6%                   | 13                        |
| 3-4 weeks                      | 81           | 90           | 133          | 71           | 92           | 9%                   | 21                        |
| 1-2 months                     | 126          | 249          | 227          | 204          | 98           | 10%                  | -106                      |
| 2-3 months                     | 107          | 178          | 283          | 181          | 82           | 8%                   | -99                       |
| >3 months                      | 509          | 629          | 596          | 553          | 573          | 57%                  | 20                        |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>1,124</b> | <b>1,350</b> | <b>1,514</b> | <b>1,182</b> | <b>1,009</b> | <b>100%</b>          | <b>-173</b>               |

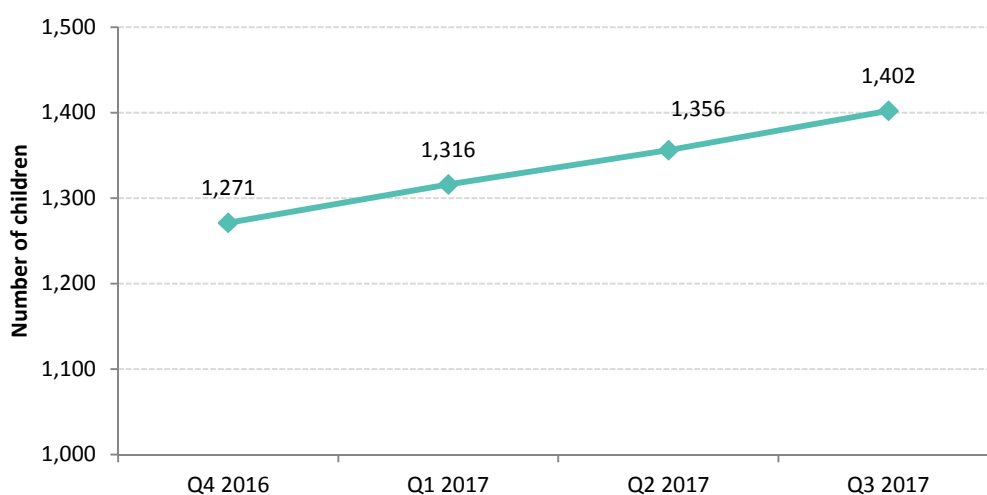
## 2.3 CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

### KEY FACTS

- 1,402 children listed as ‘active’ on the CPNS at the end of Q3 2017; 46 more than Q2 2017. Highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q3 2017.
- All but two children listed as “active” at the end of Q2 2017 had an allocated social worker.

- 1,402 children listed as ‘active’ on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)<sup>8</sup> at the end of Q3 2017; 46 more than Q2 2017 and the highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q3 2017 (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Number of children listed as 'Active' on the CPNS, by quarter



Note: data presented does not include children listed on the CPNS as visiting from another jurisdiction where there is a comparable system in place and where the child is listed on that system. At the end of Q4 2016 there was one such child; at the end of Q1 2017 there were two such children and at the end of Q3 2017 there were nine such children. *Data for Q4 2016 and Q1 2017 amended since publication of the Q4 2016 and Q1 and Q2 2017 reports.*

- The number listed as “active” equates to about 12 children per 10,000 population under 18 years and ranges from 5/10,000 population in DSW/K/WW to 21/10,000 in the Midwest area (Table 3).
- Cork, DSW/K/WW and Dublin North with the highest proportions of the under 18 population reported some of the lowest rates and fall well below the national average (Table 3).
- SLWC, Kerry and Mayo with the smallest proportions of the under 18 population reported rates above the national average with Mayo reporting the second highest rate at 20/10,000 population.

<sup>8</sup> The CPNS, in accordance with the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011, is a national record of all children who are the subject of a child protection plan agreed at a child protection conference. The CPNS is accessible to named professional groups subject to strict protocols.

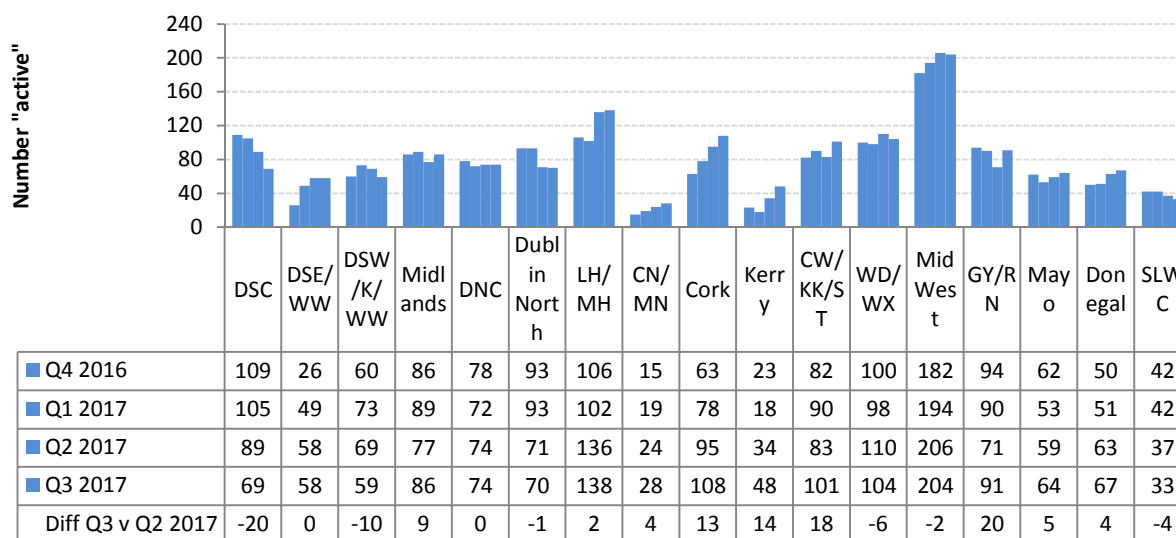
**Table 3: Children listed as 'active' on CPNS per 10,000 population 0-17 years**

| Area              | Q3 2017      | Population 0-17 years | Rate / 10,000 population 0 – 17 years Q3 2017 |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---|
| DSC               | 69           | 65,564                | 11  |
| DSE/WW            | 58           | 86,810                | 7   |
| DSW/K/WW          | 59           | 108,186               | 5   |
| Midlands          | 86           | 80,193                | 11  |
| Dublin North City | 74           | 44,927                | 16  |
| Dublin North      | 70           | 100,654               | 7   |
| LH/MH             | 138          | 93,093                | 15  |
| CN/MN             | 28           | 36,446                | 8   |
| Cork              | 108          | 134,015               | 8   |
| Kerry             | 48           | 34,527                | 14  |
| CW/KK/ST          | 101          | 63,009                | 16  |
| WD/WX             | 104          | 68,513                | 15  |
| Mid West          | 204          | 96,266                | 21  |
| GY/RN             | 91           | 79,912                | 11  |
| Mayo              | 64           | 31,968                | 20  |
| Donegal           | 67           | 42,865                | 16  |
| SLWC              | 33           | 23,554                | 14  |
| <b>National</b>   | <b>1,402</b> | <b>1,190,502</b>      | <b>12</b>                                     |

Population: Census 2016

- Nine areas reported an increase from Q2 2017 (Figure 15). The highest increase was reported by GY/RN (n=20) followed by CW/KK/ST (n=18). Cavan/Monaghan, Cork and Donegal have reported three consecutive increases from Q4 2016: Cavan/Monaghan up 13 on Q4 2016; Cork up 45 on Q4 2016 and Donegal up 17 on Q4 2017 (Figure 15).
- Six areas reported a decrease from Q2 2017. The highest decrease was reported by Dublin South Central (n=20), followed by DSW/K/WW (n=10). Dublin South Central has reported three consecutive decreases from Q4 2016: 40 fewer cases listed as “active” than in Q4 2016.

**Figure 15: Number of children listed as "active" by area, by quarter**



- 48% (n=676) of children listed as “active” in Q3 2017 were listed for 0-6 months; 30% (n=415) were listed for 7-12 months; 11% (n=148) were listed for 12-18 months; 6% (n=84) were listed for 18-24 months while the remaining 6% (n=79) were listed for longer than 24 months (Table 4).
- Listed for > 24 months: Highest percentage (35%; n=24/69) reported by Dublin South Central. Five areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 6% (DSC 35%; Dublin North City 14%; GY/RN 14% and Mayo 13% and Dublin North 7%). Five areas (DSE/WW; Midlands; CN/MN, CW/KK/ST and WD/WX) reported no child listed as active for >24 months. WD/WX had no child listed as “active” for longer than 18 months.
- Listed for < 6 months: Highest percentage (71%; n=34/48) reported by Kerry followed closely by Midlands (70%; n=60/86). Lowest percentage (19%; n=13/69) reported by Dublin South Central. Nine areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 48%.

**Table 4: Children listed as 'active' in each area at the end of Q2 2017, by length of time 'active'**

|                 | 0-6        | %<br>0-6   | 7-12       | %<br>7-12  | 12-18      | %<br>12-18 | 18-24     | %<br>18-24 | >24       | %<br>> 24 | Total        |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| DSC             | 13         | 19%        | 11         | 16%        | 11         | 16%        | 10        | 14%        | 24        | 35%       | 69           |
| DSE/WW          | 24         | 41%        | 28         | 48%        | 5          | 9%         | 1         | 2%         | 0         | 0%        | 58           |
| DSW/K/WW        | 21         | 36%        | 22         | 37%        | 14         | 24%        | 1         | 2%         | 1         | 2%        | 59           |
| Midlands        | 60         | 70%        | 23         | 27%        | 0          | 0%         | 3         | 3%         | 0         | 0%        | 86           |
| DNC             | 25         | 34%        | 24         | 32%        | 5          | 7%         | 10        | 14%        | 10        | 14%       | 74           |
| Dublin North    | 39         | 56%        | 12         | 17%        | 8          | 11%        | 6         | 9%         | 5         | 7%        | 70           |
| LH/MH           | 63         | 46%        | 37         | 27%        | 19         | 14%        | 11        | 8%         | 8         | 6%        | 138          |
| CN/MN           | 14         | 50%        | 7          | 25%        | 5          | 18%        | 2         | 7%         | 0         | 0%        | 28           |
| Cork            | 60         | 56%        | 32         | 30%        | 12         | 11%        | 1         | 1%         | 3         | 3%        | 108          |
| Kerry           | 34         | 71%        | 11         | 23%        | 1          | 2%         | 0         | 0%         | 2         | 4%        | 48           |
| CW/KK/ST        | 49         | 49%        | 40         | 40%        | 2          | 2%         | 10        | 10%        | 0         | 0%        | 101          |
| WD/WX           | 56         | 54%        | 46         | 44%        | 2          | 2%         | 0         | 0%         | 0         | 0%        | 104          |
| Mid West        | 104        | 51%        | 70         | 34%        | 14         | 7%         | 13        | 6%         | 3         | 1%        | 204          |
| GY/RN           | 46         | 51%        | 14         | 15%        | 15         | 16%        | 3         | 3%         | 13        | 14%       | 91           |
| Mayo            | 27         | 42%        | 9          | 14%        | 14         | 22%        | 6         | 9%         | 8         | 13%       | 64           |
| Donegal         | 31         | 46%        | 10         | 15%        | 19         | 28%        | 6         | 9%         | 1         | 1%        | 67           |
| SLWC            | 10         | 30%        | 19         | 58%        | 2          | 6%         | 1         | 3%         | 1         | 3%        | 33           |
| <b>National</b> | <b>676</b> | <b>48%</b> | <b>415</b> | <b>30%</b> | <b>148</b> | <b>11%</b> | <b>84</b> | <b>6%</b>  | <b>79</b> | <b>6%</b> | <b>1,402</b> |

- All but two children listed as “active” at the end of Q3 2017 had an allocated social worker. These two children were reported by Louth/Meath.
- 29 children were reactivated on the CPNS (i.e., their status changed from ‘inactive’ to ‘active’) during Q3 2017. CW/KK/ST reported the highest number (n=8) of children reactivated during Q3 2017 followed by Dublin North (n=5) and MidWest (n=4).

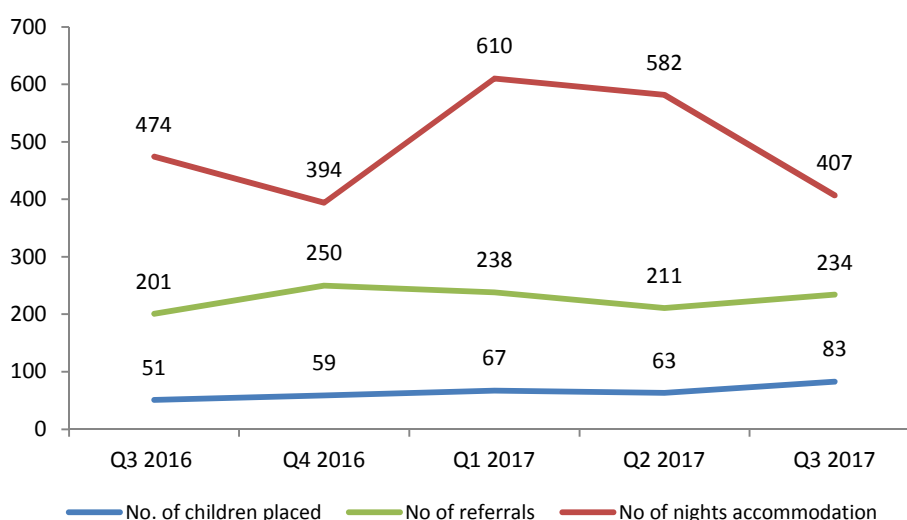
## 2.4 EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS SOCIAL WORK SERVICE / CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICE

### KEY FACTS

- 234 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)<sup>1</sup> during Q3 2017; 23 more than Q2
- 83 children were placed with the CIS during Q3 2017; 20 more than Q2
- 181 referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS) (includes service operating in Cork) during Q3 2017; 71 fewer than Q2 2017
- 67 children were placed during Q3 2017, 25 fewer than Q2

- 234 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)<sup>9</sup> during Q3 2017; 23 more than Q2 2017. This brings to 683 the number of referrals for the first nine months of 2017 (Figure 16).
- 83 children were placed with the CIS during Q3 2017; 20 more than Q2 2017 and the highest number for the period Q3 2016 – Q3 2017. This brings to 213 the number of children placed for the first nine months of 2017. *It should be noted that while the quarterly figure refers to individual children the YTD figure can include children who were placed in a previous quarter.*
- 407 nights' accommodation was supplied by the CIS during Q3 2017; 175 fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 1,599 the number of nights' accommodation supplied for the first nine months of 2017.

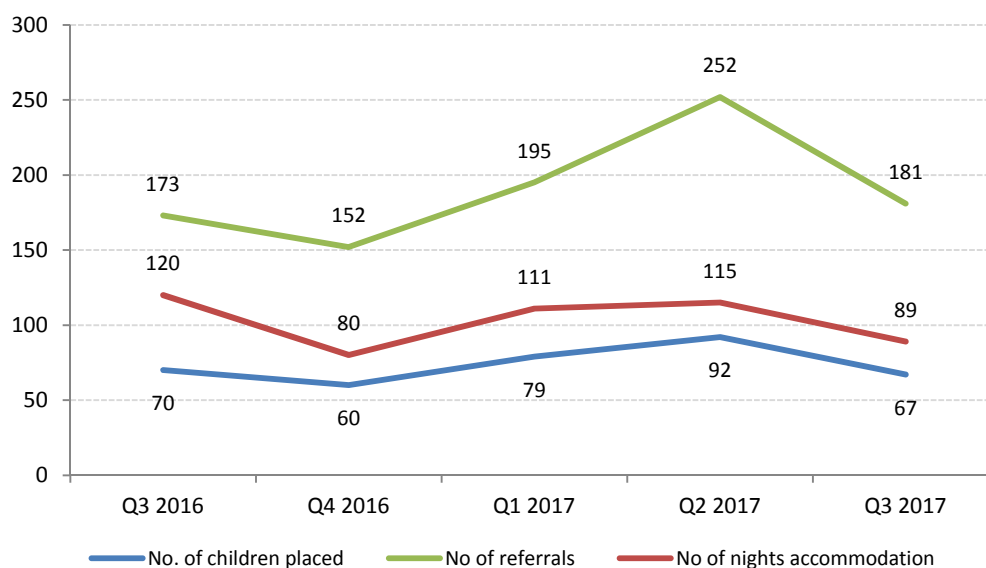
Figure 16: Referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service, by quarter Q3 2016 – Q3 2017



<sup>9</sup> The CIS provides an out-of-hours emergency social work service to young people aged under 18 years who are in crisis. The service operates across the greater Dublin area (Counties Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow). Referrals are made by service providers outside of normal working hours i.e. Gardaí, hospital and ambulance service personnel

- 181 referrals to the Emergency out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS)<sup>10</sup> (includes service operating in Cork)<sup>11</sup> during Q3 2017; 71 fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 628 the number of referrals for the first nine months of 2017 (Figure 17).
- 67 children were placed during Q3 2017, 25 fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 238 the number of children placed for the first nine months of 2017.
- 89 nights' accommodation were supplied during Q3 2017; 26 fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 315 the number of nights' accommodation supplied for the first nine months of 2017.

**Figure 17: Referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service, by quarter Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**



<sup>10</sup> Emergency Out-of-Hours Social Work Service (EOHS) operates outside of Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare. This service builds on the placement only service (referred to as the Emergency place of Safety Service) that was previously in place. The service is available Monday to Sunday between 6 pm and 7 am and each Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday from 9 am to 5 pm. The EOHS was set up to co-operate with and support An Garda Síochána in the execution of their duties and responsibilities under section 12(3) of the Child Care Act 1991<sup>10</sup> and referrals made under section 8(5) of the Refugee Act 1996.

<sup>11</sup> The HSE established emergency out of hours social work pilot projects in Cork and Donegal in 2011. The Cork pilot service continues to operate.

## 3.0 ALTERNATIVE CARE SERVICES

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- 3.1 Children in Care (Foster Care / Residential Care)
- 3.2 Aftercare
- 3.3 Adoption
- 3.4 Foster Carers
- 3.5 Hiqa Inspections

### 3.1 CHILDREN IN CARE (FOSTER CARE / RESIDENTIAL CARE)

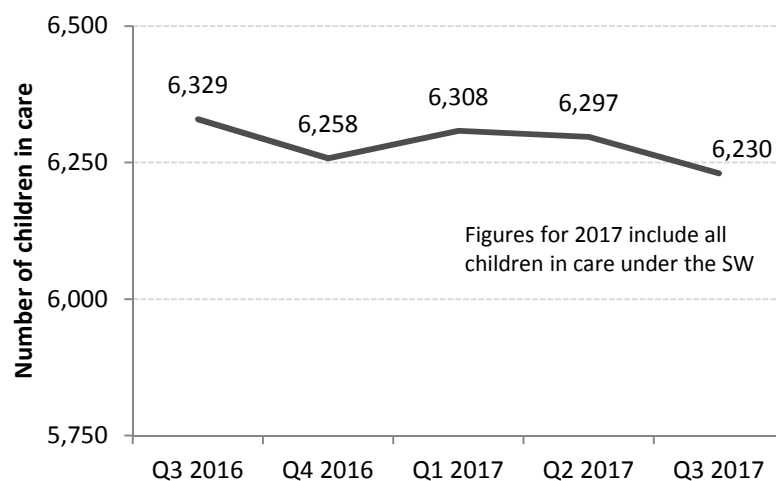
#### KEY FACTS

- 6,230 children in care at the end of Q3 2017, down 67 from Q2 2017 and 78 from Q1 2017
- 600 children in private placements, down 16 from Q2 2017
- 95% (n=5,916) of children in care had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%); no change from Q2 2017
- 314 children awaiting allocation of a social worker; 21 more than Q2 2017
- 93% (n=5,802) of children in care had an up to date care plan (against a target of 90%); down one percentage point from Q2 2017
- A total of 428 children without an up-to-date care plan, 46 more than Q2 2017

#### 3.1.1 Number of Children in Care

- 6,230 children in care at the end of Q3 2017, down 67 from Q2 2017 and 78 on Q1 2017  
This equates to about 5.2 children per 1,000 population 0-17 years.

Figure 18: Number of children in care by quarter, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017



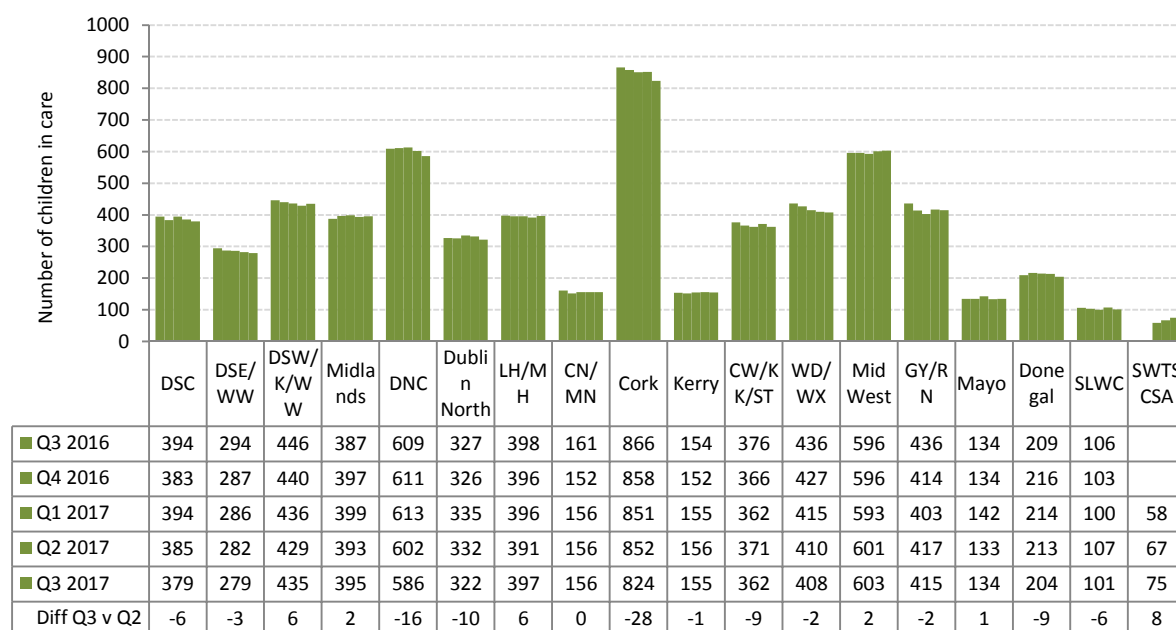
- Across the 17 areas, the number of children in care ranged from 824 in Cork to 101 in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan (Table 5).
- Dublin North City reported the highest rate of children in care per 1,000 population under 18 years at 2.5 times (13/1,000) the national rate. Dublin South East/Wicklow and Dublin North reported the lowest rates at 3.2/1,000 population. Six areas reported a rate higher than the national rate.

**Table 5: Number of children in care and rate per 1,000 population 0-17 years, Q3 2017**

| Area         | 0-17 population<br>(Census 2016) | No CIC<br>Q3 2017 | No of CIC/1,000<br>population 0-17 |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| DSC          | 65,564                           | 379               | 5.8                                |
| DSE/WW       | 86,810                           | 279               | 3.2                                |
| DSW/K/WW     | 108,186                          | 435               | 4.0                                |
| Midlands     | 80,193                           | 395               | 4.9                                |
| DNC          | 44,927                           | 586               | 13.0                               |
| Dublin North | 100,654                          | 322               | 3.2                                |
| LH/MH        | 93,093                           | 397               | 4.3                                |
| CN/MN        | 36,446                           | 156               | 4.3                                |
| Cork         | 134,015                          | 824               | 6.1                                |
| Kerry        | 34,527                           | 155               | 4.5                                |
| CW/KK/ST     | 63,009                           | 362               | 5.7                                |
| WD/WX        | 68,513                           | 408               | 6.0                                |
| Mid West     | 96,266                           | 603               | 6.3                                |
| GY/RN        | 79,912                           | 415               | 5.2                                |
| Mayo         | 31,968                           | 134               | 4.2                                |
| Donegal      | 42,865                           | 204               | 4.8                                |
| SLWC         | 23,554                           | 101               | 4.3                                |
| SWTSCSA      | -                                | 75                | -                                  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,190,502</b>                 | <b>6,230</b>      | <b>5.2</b>                         |

- Five areas along with the SWTSCSA reported an increase in children in care from Q2 2017; the highest increase was reported by the SWTSCSA (n=8), followed by DSW/K/WW and LH/MH both reporting an increase of six.
- Cork reported the highest decrease (n=28), followed by Dublin North City (n=16) and Dublin North (n=10).
- Three areas (Midlands (n=8), Midwest (n=7) and Kerry (n=1)) had more children in care at the end of Q3 2017 than Q3 2016. Thirteen of the remaining areas had fewer children in care with Cork reporting the highest decrease (n=42) followed by WD/WX (n=28); Dublin North City (n=23) and GY/RN (n=21). The remaining area (Mayo) reported no change.

**Figure 19: Breakdown of the number of children in care in each area, Q3 2016– Q3 2017**



### 3.1.2 Number of Children in Care by Care Type

- 92% (n=5,729) of children in care were in foster care (general and relative) at the end of Q3 2017, down 72 on Q2 2017 and 5.6% (n=351) were in a residential (general) placement, down six on Q2 2017 (Table 6).

**Table 6: Breakdown of the number of children in care by care type and month, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**

|         | FC Gen | Δ+/-<br>prev Q | FC Rel | Δ+/-<br>prev Q | Res Care Gen | Δ+/-<br>prev Q | Res Care Spec | Δ+/-<br>prev Q | Other Care <sup>12</sup> | Δ+/-<br>prev Q | Total | Δ+/-<br>prev Q |
|---------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Q3 2016 | 4,133  | -26            | 1,772  | -22            | 312          | -14            | 9             | -2             | 103                      | 1              | 6,329 | -63            |
| Q4 2016 | 4,102  | -31            | 1,715  | -57            | 304          | -8             | 12            | 3              | 125                      | 22             | 6,258 | -71            |
| Q1 2017 | 4,133  | 31             | 1,686  | -29            | 352          | 48             | 10            | -2             | 127                      | 2              | 6,308 | 50             |
| Q2 2017 | 4,106  | -27            | 1,695  | 9              | 357          | 5              | 11            | 1              | 128                      | 1              | 6,297 | -11            |
| Q3 2017 | 4,053  | -53            | 1,676  | -19            | 351          | -6             | 10            | -1             | 140                      | +12            | 6,230 | -67            |

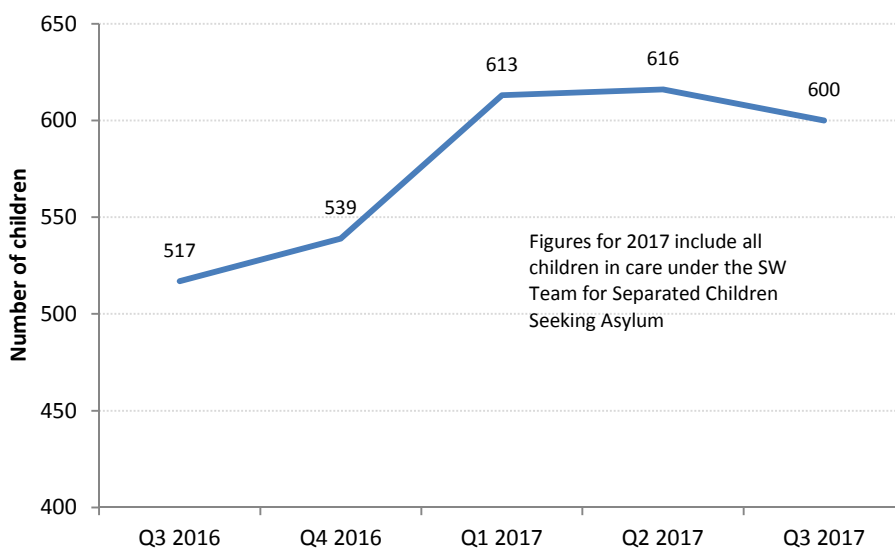
FC Gen = Foster Care General; FC Rel = Foster Care with Relatives; Res Care Gen = Residential Care General; Res Care Spec = Residential Care Special; CIC = Children in care

- 16 (0.26%) children were in out of State placements at the end of Q3 2017; down one on Q2 2017. *These children are included in the figures for the various care types set out in Table 6.*
- Five children in residential care were in a single care placement at the end of Q3 2017; down two from Q2 2017.
- 156 children were in respite care (from home) at the end of Q3 2017, down 21 on Q2 2017.

### 3.1.3 Children in Private Placements

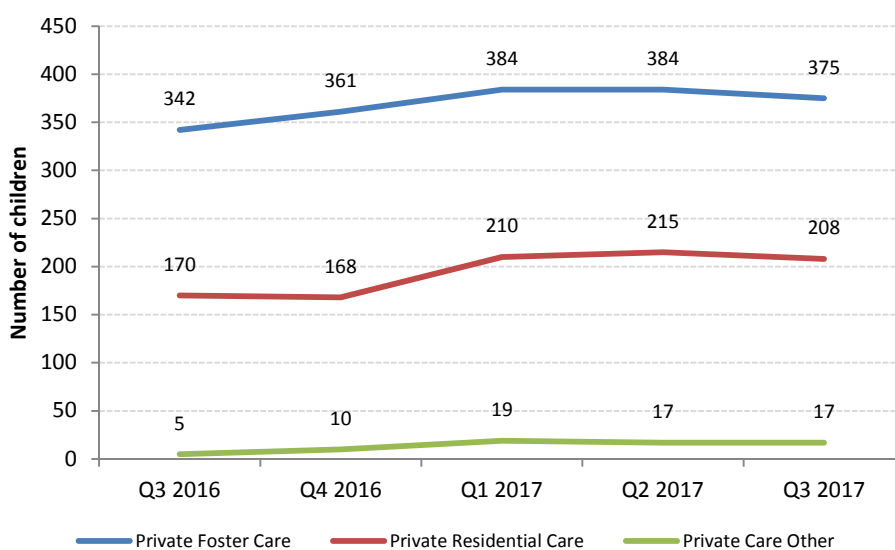
- 600 (10%) children in care at the end of Q3 2017 were in private placements<sup>12</sup>; 16 fewer than Q2 2017 (Figure 20). This figure includes 45 children in care under the SWTSCSA.

Figure 20: Number of children in private placements, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017



- 63% (n=375) of children in private placements were in private foster care; 35% (n=208) were in private residential placements (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Number of children in private placements by care type, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017

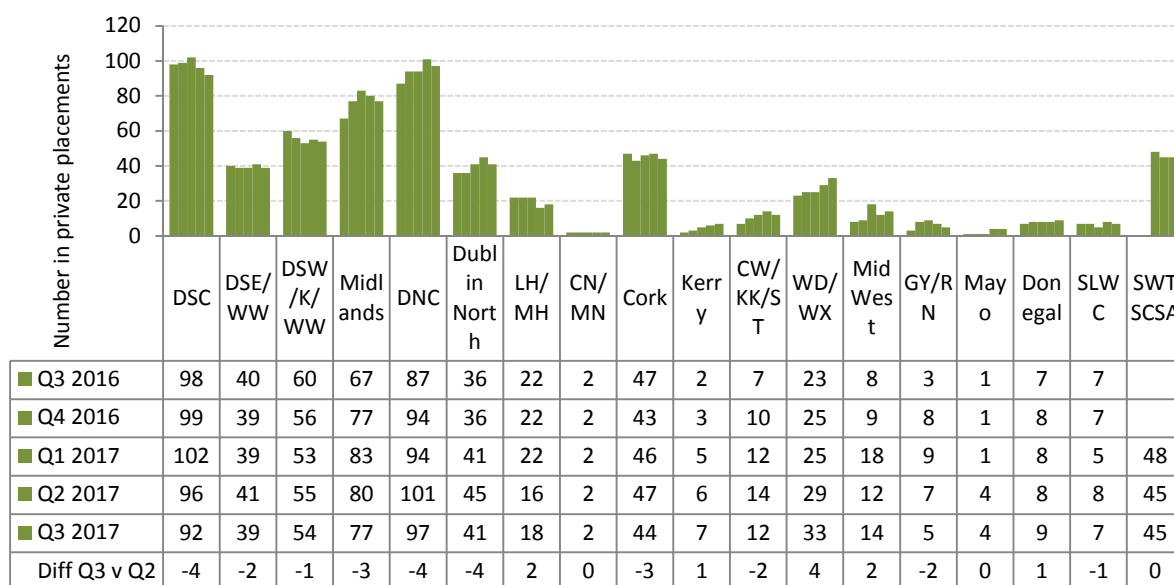


- Dublin North City (n=97) followed by Dublin South Central (n=92) reported the highest number of children in private placements in Q3 2017. Cavan/Monaghan (n=2), Mayo (n=4) and GY/RN (n=5) reported the fewest number (Figure 22).
- Five areas reported an increase in private placements from Q2 2017. The highest increase was reported by Waterford/Wexford (n=4). Ten of the remaining twelve areas reported a decrease.

<sup>12</sup> The number of children in private placements is included in the children in care figures presented in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2

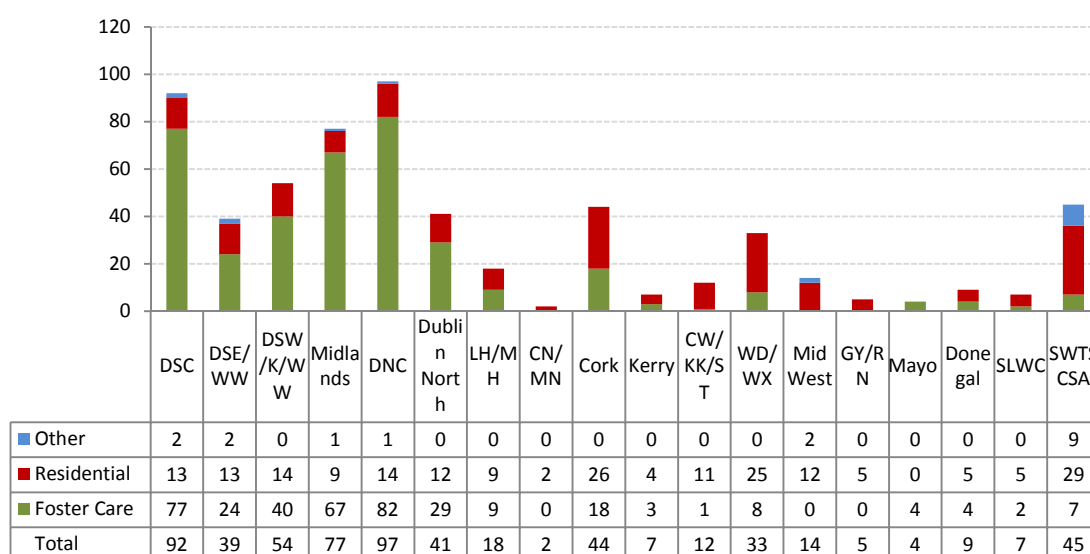
- Ten areas had more children in private placements at the end of Q3 2017 than Q3 2016. The highest increases were reported by Midlands, Dublin North City and Waterford/Wexford, all reporting 10 additional children in private placements.

**Figure 22: Number of children in private placements by area, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**



- Tusla’s Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum (n=29) followed by Cork (n=26) and Waterford/Wexford (n=25) reported the highest numbers of children in private residential placements (Figure 23).
- Dublin North City reported the highest number of children in private foster care placements (n=82), followed by Dublin South Central (n=77) and Midlands (n=67). Almost two-thirds (60%; n=226/375) of children in private foster care placements are reported by these three areas.
- Three areas (Cavan/Monaghan, Galway/Roscommon and MidWest) reported no children in private foster care placements while Mayo reported no child in a private residential placement.

**Figure 23: Number of children in private placements by care type Q3 2017**



### 3.1.4 Children in Care with an Allocated Social Worker

- 95% (n=5,916/6,230) of children in care nationally had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%) at the end of Q3 2017; no change from Q2 2017 (Table 7).
- A total of 314 children were awaiting allocation of a social worker; 21 more than Q2 2017 (n=293).

**Table 7: Children in care (CIC) with an allocated social worker (SW) by care type**

| Care Type                  | CIC          | No with SW   | % with SW  | CIC          | No with SW   | % with SW  |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
|                            | Q2 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q2 2017    | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017    |
| Foster Care (General)      | 4,106        | 3,940        | 96%        | 4,053        | 3,866        | 95%        |
| Foster Care (Relatives)    | 1,695        | 1,574        | 93%        | 1,676        | 1,555        | 93%        |
| Residential Care (General) | 357          | 353          | 99%        | 351          | 347          | 99%        |
| Residential Special Care   | 11           | 11           | 100%       | 10           | 10           | 100%       |
| Other Placements           | 128          | 126          | 98%        | 140          | 138          | 99%        |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>6,297</b> | <b>6,004</b> | <b>95%</b> | <b>6,230</b> | <b>5,916</b> | <b>95%</b> |

- Five areas along with Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum met the target of 100% of children in care with an allocated social worker. A further six areas reported a percentage of 95% or higher. Three areas reported a percentage less than 90% with the poorest performing area (CN/MN) reporting 84% (Table 8).
- Seven areas reported an increase in percentage performance from Q2 2017; the most notable being DSW/K/WW, up 8 percentage points to almost 92%.
- The area with the highest number of children awaiting an allocated social worker is Midwest (n=67) followed by Midlands (n=53).

**Table 8: Number of children in care with an allocated social worker**

| Area         | No in Care Q2 2017 | No with an allocated SW Q2 2017 | % with an allocated SW Q2 2017 | No in Care Q3 2017 | No with an allocated SW Q3 2017 | % with an allocated SW Q3 2017 | +/- Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Donegal      | 213                | 213                             | 100.0%                         | 204                | 204                             | 100.0%                         | 0%               |
| Kerry        | 156                | 156                             | 100.0%                         | 155                | 155                             | 100.0%                         | 0%               |
| Mayo         | 133                | 133                             | 100.0%                         | 134                | 134                             | 100.0%                         | 0%               |
| SWTSCSA      | 67                 | 67                              | 100.0%                         | 75                 | 75                              | 100.0%                         | 0%               |
| SLWC         | 107                | 107                             | 100.0%                         | 101                | 101                             | 100.0%                         | 0%               |
| WD/WX        | 410                | 407                             | 99.3%                          | 408                | 408                             | 100.0%                         | 1%               |
| DSC          | 385                | 382                             | 99.2%                          | 379                | 378                             | 99.7%                          | 1%               |
| DSE/WW       | 282                | 277                             | 98.2%                          | 279                | 278                             | 99.6%                          | 1%               |
| GY/RN        | 417                | 416                             | 99.8%                          | 415                | 411                             | 99.0%                          | -1%              |
| Dublin North | 332                | 305                             | 91.9%                          | 322                | 312                             | 96.9%                          | 5%               |
| DNC          | 602                | 589                             | 97.8%                          | 586                | 567                             | 96.8%                          | -1%              |
| Cork         | 852                | 828                             | 97.2%                          | 824                | 788                             | 95.6%                          | -2%              |
| LH/MH        | 391                | 369                             | 94.4%                          | 397                | 371                             | 93.5%                          | -1%              |

|                 |              |              |              |              |              |            |           |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>DSW/K/WW</b> | 429          | 360          | 83.9%        | 435          | 398          | 91.5%      | 8%        |
| <b>CW/KK/ST</b> | 371          | 329          | 88.7%        | 362          | 327          | 90.3%      | 1.6%      |
| <b>MidWest</b>  | 601          | 577          | 96.0%        | 603          | 536          | 88.9%      | -7.1%     |
| <b>Midlands</b> | 393          | 359          | 91.3%        | 395          | 342          | 86.6%      | -5%       |
| <b>CN/MN</b>    | 156          | 130          | 83.3%        | 156          | 131          | 84.0%      | 1%        |
| <b>National</b> | <b>6,297</b> | <b>6,004</b> | <b>95.3%</b> | <b>6,230</b> | <b>5,916</b> | <b>95%</b> | <b>0%</b> |

### 3.1.5 Children in Care with a Care Plan

- 93% (n=5,802/6,230) of children in care had an up-to-date care plan; down one percentage points from Q2 2017 (Table 9).
- A total of 428 children did not have an up-to-date care plan, 46 more than Q2 2017 (n=382).

*However, it should be noted that variances have been identified in how data on this metric are being reported by areas. In some areas care plans that have fallen due for review and not updated are included. Also, it should be noted that where a care plan is not up-to-date, the care plan in place (albeit that it is awaiting review) is used to support the care of the child.*

**Table 9: Number of children in care (CIC) with an up-to-date care plan by care type**

| Care Type                       | CIC          | No with CP   | % with CP  | CIC          | No with CP   | % with CP  |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
|                                 | Q2 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q2 2017    | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017      | Q3 2017    |
| <b>Foster Care General</b>      | 4,106        | 3,860        | 94%        | 4,053        | 3,785        | 93%        |
| <b>Foster Care (Relatives)</b>  | 1,695        | 1,575        | 93%        | 1,676        | 1,534        | 92%        |
| <b>Residential Care General</b> | 357          | 351          | 98%        | 351          | 340          | 97%        |
| <b>Residential Special Care</b> | 11           | 11           | 100%       | 10           | 10           | 100%       |
| <b>Other Placements</b>         | 128          | 118          | 92%        | 140          | 133          | 95%        |
| <b>National</b>                 | <b>6,297</b> | <b>5,915</b> | <b>94%</b> | <b>6,230</b> | <b>5,802</b> | <b>93%</b> |

- 11 areas along with Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum met the target of 90% of children in care with an up-to-date care plan (Table 10).
- Five areas reported an increased percentage from Q2 2017, the most notable being that for CW/KK/ST up four percentage points from 94.9% to 98.9%. The most notable decreases were reported by SLWC, down 12 percentage points to 78% and Midlands down eight percentage points to 87%.
- DSW/K/WW and Dublin North are the two poorest performing areas with 108 and 75 children respectively with no up to date care plan.

**Table 10: Breakdown of the number of children in care with an up to date care plan**

| Area            | No in Care Q2 2017 | No with a care plan Q2 2017 | % with a care plan Q2 2017 | No in Care Q3 2017 | No with a care plan Q3 2017 | % with a care plan Q3 2017 | +/- Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Mayo            | 133                | 133                         | 100.0%                     | 134                | 134                         | 100.0%                     | 0.0%             |
| MidWest         | 601                | 601                         | 100.0%                     | 603                | 603                         | 100.0%                     | 0.0%             |
| SWTSCSA         | 67                 | 67                          | 100.0%                     | 75                 | 75                          | 100.0%                     | 0.0%             |
| GY/RN           | 417                | 416                         | 99.8%                      | 415                | 415                         | 100.0%                     | 0.2%             |
| WD/WX           | 410                | 408                         | 99.5%                      | 408                | 408                         | 100.0%                     | 0.5%             |
| CW/KK/ST        | 371                | 352                         | 94.9%                      | 362                | 358                         | 98.9%                      | 4.0%             |
| Donegal         | 213                | 212                         | 99.5%                      | 204                | 201                         | 98.5%                      | -1.0%            |
| DNC             | 602                | 584                         | 97.0%                      | 586                | 566                         | 96.6%                      | -0.4%            |
| LH/MH           | 391                | 370                         | 94.6%                      | 397                | 383                         | 96.5%                      | 1.8%             |
| DSE/WW          | 282                | 271                         | 96.1%                      | 279                | 267                         | 95.7%                      | -0.4%            |
| Cork            | 852                | 797                         | 93.5%                      | 824                | 782                         | 94.9%                      | 1.4%             |
| Kerry           | 156                | 151                         | 96.8%                      | 155                | 146                         | 94.2%                      | -2.6%            |
| DSC             | 385                | 344                         | 89.4%                      | 379                | 335                         | 88.4%                      | -1.0%            |
| Midlands        | 393                | 373                         | 94.9%                      | 395                | 342                         | 86.6%                      | -8.3%            |
| CN/MN           | 156                | 139                         | 89.1%                      | 156                | 134                         | 85.9%                      | -3.2%            |
| SLWC            | 107                | 97                          | 90.7%                      | 101                | 79                          | 78.2%                      | -12.4%           |
| Dublin North    | 332                | 263                         | 79.2%                      | 322                | 247                         | 76.7%                      | -2.5%            |
| DSW/K/WW        | 429                | 337                         | 78.6%                      | 435                | 327                         | 75.2%                      | -3.4%            |
| <b>National</b> | <b>6,297</b>       | <b>5,915</b>                | <b>93.9%</b>               | <b>6,230</b>       | <b>5,802</b>                | <b>93%</b>                 | <b>-1%</b>       |

### 3.1.6 Children in Care in Education

- 98% (n=3,833/3,899) of children in care aged 6 to 15 years (inclusive) were in full time education at the end of Q3 2017, up 0.3 percentage points from Q2 (Table 11). *Note: figures do not include children in care under the care of Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum.*
- Four areas reported 100% with only one area (DSW/K/WW) reporting less than 95% of children in care aged 6 to 15 years (inclusive) in full time education.
- 92.4 % (n=960/1,039) of children in care aged 16 and 17 years were in full time education at the end of Q3 2017; up four percentage points on Q2 2017 (Table 12). *Note: figures do not include children in care under the care of Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum.*
- Twelve areas reported 90% or higher. The lowest rate was reported by Dublin South Central (80%) followed by Midwest (86%) and Donegal (86%).

**Table 11: Children in care, 6 -15 years, in full time education, Q2 2017 – Q3 2017**

| Area         | No of CIC 6-15 years Q2 2017 | No of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q2 2017 | % of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q2 2017 | No of CIC 6-15 years Q3 2017 | No of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q3 2017 | % of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q3 2017 | +/- Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|--|---|------------------|
| DSC          | 245                          | 237  | 96.7%                                       | 246                          | 238  | 96.7%                                       | 0.0%             |
| DSE/WW       | 184                          | 180  | 97.8%                                       | 179                          | 179  | 100.0%                                      | 2.2%             |
| DSW/K/WW     | 257                          | 245  | 95.3%                                       | 272                          | 254  | 93.4%                                       | -1.9%            |
| Midlands     | 222                          | 216  | 97.3%                                       | 238                          | 237  | 99.6%                                       | 2.3%             |
| DNC          | 378                          | 370  | 97.9%                                       | 369                          | 356  | 96.5%                                       | -1.4%            |
| Dublin North | 200                          | 189  | 94.5%                                       | 198                          | 195  | 98.5%                                       | 4.0%             |
| LH/MH        | 241                          | 240  | 99.6%                                       | 240                          | 239  | 99.6%                                       | 0.0%             |
| CN/MN        | 96                           | 95   | 99.0%                                       | 102                          | 101  | 99.0%                                       | 0.0%             |
| Cork         | 540                          | 528  | 97.8%                                       | 533                          | 526  | 98.7%                                       | 0.9%             |
| Kerry        | 112                          | 111  | 99.1%                                       | 107                          | 105  | 98.1%                                       | -1.0%            |
| CW/KK/ST     | 175                          | 175  | 100.0%                                      | 216                          | 216  | 100.0%                                      | 0.0%             |
| WD/WX        | 286                          | 282  | 98.6%                                       | 273                          | 269  | 98.5%                                       | -0.1%            |
| Mid West     | 373                          | 365  | 97.9%                                       | 380                          | 374  | 98.4%                                       | 0.5%             |
| GY/RN        | 258                          | 258  | 100.0%                                      | 255                          | 254  | 99.6%                                       | -0.4%            |
| Mayo         | 81                           | 80   | 98.8%                                       | 80                           | 80   | 100.0%                                      | 1.2%             |
| Donegal      | 145                          | 145  | 100.0%                                      | 144                          | 144  | 100.0%                                      | 0.0%             |
| SLWC         | 67                           | 66   | 98.5%                                       | 67                           | 66   | 98.5%                                       | 0.0%             |
| National     | <b>3,860</b>                 | <b>3,782</b>                                 | <b>98.0%</b>                                | <b>3,899</b>                 | <b>3,833</b>                                 | <b>98.3%</b>                                | <b>0.3%</b>      |

**Table 12: Children in care, 16 and 17 years, in full time education, Q2 2017 – Q3 2017**

| Area         | No of CIC 16-17 yrs Q2 2017 | No of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q2 2017 | % of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q2 2017 | No of CIC 16-17 yrs Q 2017 | No of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q3 2017 | % of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q3 2017 | +/- Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|---|--|------------------|
| DSC          | 63                          | 50  | 79.4%  | 60                         | 48  | 80.0%  | 0.6%             |
| DSE/WW       | 47                          | 46  | 97.9%  | 47                         | 44  | 93.6%  | -4.3%            |
| DSW/K/WW     | 90                          | 78  | 86.7%  | 86                         | 75  | 87.2%  | 0.5%             |
| Midlands     | 59                          | 50  | 84.8%  | 58                         | 55  | 94.8%  | 10.0%            |
| DNC          | 123                         | 116   | 94.3%  | 124                        | 116   | 93.5%  | -0.8%            |
| Dublin North | 57                          | 53  | 93.0%  | 58                         | 53  | 91.4%  | -1.6%            |
| LH/MH        | 70                          | 67  | 95.7%  | 79                         | 71  | 89.9%  | -5.8%            |
| CN/MN        | 22                          | 20  | 90.9%  | 22                         | 22  | 100.0%                                       | 9.1%             |
| Cork         | 151                         | 144   | 95.4%  | 141                        | 133   | 94.3%  | -1.1%            |
| Kerry        | 25                          | 24  | 96.0%  | 25                         | 24  | 96.0%  | 0.0%             |
| CW/KK/ST     | 63                          | 48  | 76.2%  | 61                         | 61  | 100.0%                                       | 23.8%            |
| WD/WX        | 61                          | 57  | 93.4%  | 56                         | 53  | 94.6%  | 1.2%             |
| Mid West     | 95                          | 63  | 66.3%  | 92                         | 79  | 85.9%  | 19.6%            |
| GY/RN        | 61                          | 57  | 93.4%  | 67                         | 67  | 100.0%                                       | 6.6%             |
| Mayo         | 18                          | 17  | 94.4%  | 25                         | 25  | 100.0%                                       | 5.6%             |
| Donegal      | 26                          | 22  | 84.6%  | 22                         | 19  | 86.4%  | 1.8%             |

|                 |             |            |              |              |            |              |             |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| SLWC            | 17          | 14         | 82.4%        | 16           | 15         | 93.8%        | 11.4%       |
| <b>National</b> | <b>1048</b> | <b>926</b> | <b>88.4%</b> | <b>1,039</b> | <b>960</b> | <b>92.4%</b> | <b>4.0%</b> |

## 3.2 AFTERCARE

### KEY FACTS

- 1,989 young adults (all ages) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q3 2017; 7 fewer than Q2
- 86% (n=1,638/1,914) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an allocated aftercare worker; no change from Q2 2017
- 84% (n=1,608/1,914) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an aftercare plan; up two percentage points on Q2 2017
- 157 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years; 388 discharged 2017 YTD. 85% (n=134) had an allocated aftercare worker, up one percentage points on Q2 2017

### 3.2.1 Young adults in receipt of aftercare services

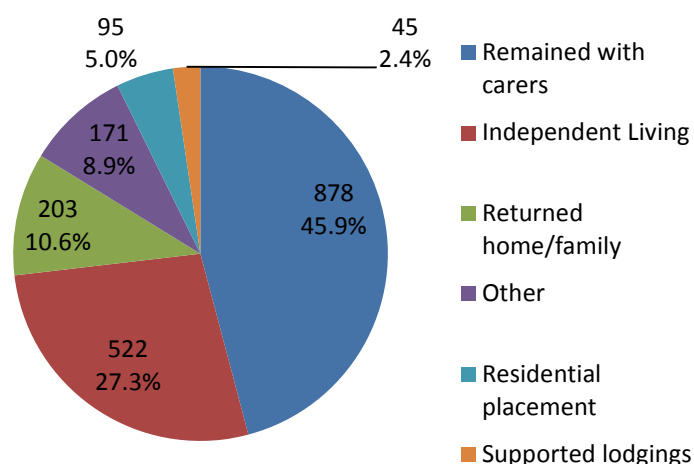
- 1,989 young adults (all ages i.e., 18 years and upwards and inclusive of those 25 or older) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q3 2017; seven fewer than Q2 2017 (Table 13)
- 1,914 (96%) young adults in receipt of aftercare services were aged 18-22 years (inclusive)
- 1,145 (60%) of this cohort (18-22 years) were in full-time education (Table 13)
- 1,409 (n=74%) of the 18-22 years cohort were 18-20 years
- 869 (62%) of those 18-20 years were in full-time education

**Table 13: Young adults in receipt of aftercare services and in fulltime education Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**

|                | Total no. of young adults in receipt of aftercare services (all ages) | No of 18-22 years inclusive in receipt of aftercare service | % 18-22 years inclusive in receipt of aftercare in full time education | No. of 18-20 years inclusive in receipt of aftercare service | % 18-20 years inclusive in receipt of aftercare in full time education |
|----------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Q3 2017</b> | 1,989   | 1,914   | 1,145 (60%)  | 1,409  | 869 (62%)  |
| <b>Q2 2017</b> | 1,996   | 1,902   | 1,116 (59%)  | 1,481  | 887 (60%)  |
| <b>Q1 2017</b> | 1,940   | 1,853   | 1,107 (60%)  | 1,475  | 875 (59%)  |
| <b>Q4 2016</b> | 1,880   | 1,806   | 1,040 (58%)  | 1,389  | 803 (58%)  |
| <b>Q3 2016</b> | 1,920   | 1,841   | 1,001 (54%)  | 1,429  | 810 (57%)  |

- In terms of living arrangements, 46% (n=878) of the 18-22 year olds remained with their carers, 11% (n=203) returned home, 27% (n=522) were in independent living arrangements and 5% (n=95) were in a residential placement (Figure 24).

**Figure 24: Living arrangements of young adults (18-22 years) in receipt of aftercare services, Q3 2017**



- 86% (n=1,638) of the 18-22 years in receipt of aftercare had an allocated aftercare worker at the end of Q3 2017; no change from Q2
- Seven areas reported 100% with a further five areas reporting 90% or higher. The lowest percentage was reported by Dublin South Central (41%; n=45/109) followed by DSW/K/WW (55%; 89/162) (Table 14).
- Three areas reported an increased percentage from Q2 2017; highest increase reported by Cork, up from 87% to 95% followed by WD/WX up from 92% to 99%.

**Table 14: Young adults 18-22 years in receipt of an aftercare service with an allocated aftercare worker**

| Area         | No 18-22 years in aftercare Q2 2017 | No with an allocated worker Q2 2017 | % with an allocated worker Q2 2017 | No 18-22 years in aftercare Q3 2017 | No with an allocated worker Q3 2017 | % with an allocated worker Q3 2017 | Δ (=/-) Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| DSC          | 165                                 | 80                                  | 48%                                | 109                                 | 45                                  | 41%                                | -7%                       |
| DSE/WW       | 109                                 | 103                                 | 94%                                | 109                                 | 104                                 | 95%                                | 1%                        |
| DSW/K/WW     | 153                                 | 97                                  | 63%                                | 162                                 | 89                                  | 55%                                | -8%                       |
| Midlands     | 114                                 | 114                                 | 100%                               | 117                                 | 117                                 | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| DNC          | 143                                 | 118                                 | 83%                                | 159                                 | 127                                 | 80%                                | -3%                       |
| Dublin North | 75                                  | 75                                  | 100%                               | 86                                  | 86                                  | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| LH/MH        | 116                                 | 106                                 | 91%                                | 155                                 | 120                                 | 77%                                | -14%                      |
| CN/MN        | 62                                  | 62                                  | 100%                               | 70                                  | 70                                  | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| Cork         | 253                                 | 221                                 | 87%                                | 239                                 | 226                                 | 95%                                | 8%                        |
| Kerry        | 37                                  | 37                                  | 100%                               | 38                                  | 38                                  | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| CW/KK/ST     | 114                                 | 71                                  | 62%                                | 124                                 | 75                                  | 60%                                | -2%                       |
| WD/WX        | 143                                 | 131                                 | 92%                                | 137                                 | 135                                 | 99%                                | 7%                        |
| Mid West     | 154                                 | 154                                 | 100%                               | 162                                 | 162                                 | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| GY/RN        | 148                                 | 147                                 | 99%                                | 136                                 | 135                                 | 99%                                | 0%                        |
| Mayo         | 43                                  | 41                                  | 95%                                | 31                                  | 29                                  | 94%                                | -1%                       |
| Donegal      | 45                                  | 45                                  | 100%                               | 48                                  | 48                                  | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| SLWC         | 28                                  | 28                                  | 100%                               | 32                                  | 32                                  | 100%                               | 0%                        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,902</b>                        | <b>1,630</b>                        | <b>86%</b>                         | <b>1,914</b>                        | <b>1,638</b>                        | <b>86%</b>                         | <b>0%</b>                 |

- 84% (n= 1,608) of the same cohort had an aftercare plan at the end of Q3 2017; up two percentage points on Q2 2017
- Five areas reported 100% with a further seven areas reporting 90% or higher. The lowest percentage was reported by DSW/K/WW (38%; n=62/162) followed by Dublin South Central (49%; n=53/109) and CW/KK/ST (58%; 72/124) (Table 15).
- Eight areas reported an increased percentage from Q2 2017; highest increase reported by GY/RN, up from 81% to 82%. The highest decrease was reported by LH/MH, down from 91% to 77% (n=120/155)

**Table 15: Young adults 18-22 years in receipt of an aftercare service with an aftercare plan**

| Area         | No 18-22 years in aftercare Q2 2017 | No with an aftercare plan Q2 2017 | % with an aftercare plan Q2 2017 | No 18-22 years in aftercare Q3 2017 | No with an aftercare plan Q3 2017 | % with an aftercare plan Q3 2017 | Δ (=/-) Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| DSC          | 165                                 | 73                                | 44%                              | 109                                 | 53                                | 49%                              | 5%                        |
| DSE/WW       | 109                                 | 97                                | 89%                              | 109                                 | 100                               | 92%                              | 3%                        |
| DSW/K/WW     | 153                                 | 77                                | 50%                              | 162                                 | 62                                | 38%                              | -12%                      |
| Midlands     | 114                                 | 109                               | 96%                              | 117                                 | 117                               | 100%                             | 4%                        |
| DNC          | 143                                 | 129                               | 90%                              | 159                                 | 148                               | 93%                              | 3%                        |
| Dublin North | 75                                  | 75                                | 100%                             | 86                                  | 80                                | 93%                              | -7%                       |
| LH/MH        | 116                                 | 106                               | 91%                              | 155                                 | 120                               | 77%                              | -14%                      |
| CN/MN        | 62                                  | 61                                | 98%                              | 70                                  | 70                                | 100%                             | 2%                        |
| Cork         | 253                                 | 251                               | 99%                              | 239                                 | 236                               | 99%                              | 0%                        |
| Kerry        | 37                                  | 37                                | 100%                             | 38                                  | 38                                | 100%                             | 0%                        |
| CW/KK/ST     | 114                                 | 65                                | 57%                              | 124                                 | 72                                | 58%                              | 1%                        |
| WD/WX        | 143                                 | 143                               | 100%                             | 137                                 | 135                               | 99%                              | -1%                       |
| Mid West     | 154                                 | 150                               | 97%                              | 162                                 | 158                               | 98%                              | 1%                        |
| GY/RN        | 148                                 | 75                                | 51%                              | 136                                 | 111                               | 82%                              | 31%                       |
| Mayo         | 43                                  | 41                                | 95%                              | 31                                  | 28                                | 90%                              | -5%                       |
| Donegal      | 45                                  | 45                                | 100%                             | 48                                  | 48                                | 100%                             | 0%                        |
| SLWC         | 28                                  | 28                                | 100%                             | 32                                  | 32                                | 100%                             | 0%                        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,902</b>                        | <b>1,562</b>                      | <b>82%</b>                       | <b>1,914</b>                        | <b>1,608</b>                      | <b>84%</b>                       | <b>2%</b>                 |

### 3.2.2 Young adults discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years

- 157 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years during Q3 2017; 39 more than Q2 2017 (Table 16). This brings to 388 the number discharged for 2017 YTD
- 100% (n=157/157) were eligible for an aftercare service and of these 90% (n=142/157) were availing of the service.

- 85% (n=134) of those discharged had an allocated aftercare worker; up one percentage point on Q2 2017. Eleven areas reported 100%. The lowest percentage was reported by DSC (25%).

**Table 16: Number discharged, eligible for aftercare service and allocated aftercare worker, Q2 2017 – Q3 2017**

| Area         | No discharged Q2 2017 | No discharged eligible for aftercare Q2 2017 | No availing of an aftercare service Q2 2017 | No with allocated aftercare worker Q2 2017 | % with allocated aftercare worker Q2 2017 | No discharged Q3 2017 | No discharged eligible for aftercare Q3 2017 | No availing of an aftercare service Q3 2017 | No with allocated aftercare worker Q3 2017 | % with allocated aftercare worker Q3 2017 |
|--------------|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| DSC          | 9                     | 9  | 9   | 4  | 44%                                       | 12                    | 12   | 9   | 3  | 25%                                       |
| DSE/WW       | 9                     | 9  | 9   | 8  | 89%                                       | 6                     | 6  | 6   | 6  | 100%                                      |
| DSW/K/WW     | 11                    | 11   | 9   | 7  | 64%                                       | 14                    | 14   | 8   | 10   | 71%                                       |
| Midlands     | 10                    | 7  | 7   | 7  | 70%                                       | 4                     | 4  | 4   | 4  | 100%                                      |
| DNC          | 11                    | 11   | 10  | 8  | 73%                                       | 13                    | 13   | 8   | 8  | 62%                                       |
| Dublin North | 6                     | 6  | 6   | 6  | 100%                                      | 6                     | 6  | 6   | 6  | 100%                                      |
| LH/MH        | 6                     | 5  | 5   | 5  | 83%                                       | 6                     | 6  | 6   | 6  | 100%                                      |
| CN/MN        | 2                     | 2  | 2   | 2  | 100%                                      | 5                     | 5  | 5   | 5  | 100%                                      |
| Cork         | 15                    | 15   | 15  | 15   | 100%                                      | 23                    | 23   | 23  | 20   | 87%                                       |
| Kerry        | 4                     | 4  | 4   | 4  | 100%                                      | 2                     | 2  | 2   | 2  | 100%                                      |
| CW/KK/ST     | 6                     | 5  | 5   | 5  | 83%                                       | 8                     | 8  | 8   | 7  | 88%                                       |
| WD/WX        | 10                    | 10   | 10  | 9  | 90%                                       | 11                    | 11   | 11  | 11   | 100%                                      |
| Mid West     | 6                     | 6  | 6   | 6  | 100%                                      | 12                    | 12   | 11  | 11   | 92%                                       |
| GY/RN        | 1                     | 1  | 1   | 1  | 100%                                      | 27                    | 27   | 27  | 27   | 100%                                      |
| Mayo         | 2                     | 2  | 2   | 2  | 100%                                      | 1                     | 1  | 1   | 1  | 100%                                      |
| Donegal      | 7                     | 7  | 7   | 7  | 100%                                      | 3                     | 3  | 3   | 3  | 100%                                      |
| SLWC         | 3                     | 3  | 3   | 3  | 100%                                      | 4                     | 4  | 4   | 4  | 100%                                      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>118</b>            | <b>113</b>                                   | <b>110</b>                                  | <b>99</b>                                  | <b>84%</b>                                | <b>157</b>            | <b>157</b>                                   | <b>142</b>                                  | <b>134</b>                                 | <b>85%</b>                                |

### 3.3 ADOPTION SERVICES

#### KEY FACTS

- 189 new applications to commence tracing for a searched person in Q3 2017; 755 received 2017 YTD
- 828 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q3 2017; up 74 on Q2
- All but one service meeting the target of eight weeks or less from time of application to provision of non-identifying information
- 41 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received in Q3 2017; 138 received 2017 YTD
- 49 new children were referred for adoption in Q3 2017; 142 referred 2017 YTD
- 34 completed adoption assessments presented to Local Adoption Committees in Q3 2017 ; 109 presented 2017 YTD

#### 3.3.1 Information and Tracing Service

The Agency's Adoption Information and Tracing Service oversees a broad spectrum of enquiries from a wide range of people, including adopted people, birth parents, adoptive parents, siblings of adopted people and other birth relatives and people raised in long-term foster care. The service operates on a non-statutory basis within the wider legal framework of the Adoption Acts and assists each of these categories of person with their information and tracing enquiries.

- 311 new enquiries regarding information and tracing received in Q3 2017 bringing the total number of enquiries for the first nine months of 2017 to 1,267.
- 189 new applications to commence tracing of a searched person received in Q3 2017 bringing the total number of new applications for the first nine months of 2017 to 755.
- 828 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q3 2017; 74 (10%) more than Q2 2017 and the highest number for the period Q3 2016 – Q3 2017 (Table 17).
- Highest number of applicants (n=350; 42%) were awaiting a service in the Cork/Kerry area. This is due to the majority of files being held in this area.
- Five services reported an increase in applicants awaiting from Q2 2017. The highest increase was reported by DML/DNE (n=31).

**Table 17: Number of applicants awaiting an information and tracing service**

| Service Area  | No waiting Q3 2016 | No waiting Q4 2016 | No waiting Q1 2017 | No waiting Q2 2017 | No waiting Q3 2017 | Δ (+/-) Q3 v Q2 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Dublin Mid Leinster<br>Dublin North East<br><i>These two services are combined for applications waiting</i> | 148                | 221                | 277                | 216                | 247                | +31             |
| Cork/Kerry  | 304                | 304                | 335                | 351                | 350                | -1              |
| CW/KK/ST/WD/WX  | 79                 | 62                 | 63                 | 60                 | 70                 | +10             |
| Midwest   | 38                 | 14                 | 23                 | 26                 | 40                 | +14             |
| Galway/Roscommon  | 23                 | 33                 | 44                 | 37                 | 53                 | +16             |
| Mayo  | 7                  | 7                  | 0                  | 4                  | 3                  | -1              |
| Donegal/SLWC  | 21                 | 49                 | 63                 | 60                 | 65                 | +5              |
| <b>National</b>   | <b>620</b>         | <b>690</b>         | <b>805</b>         | <b>754</b>         | <b>828</b>         | <b>+74</b>      |

- At the end of Q3 2017, all services except Donegal/SLWC were meeting the target of eight weeks or less for the length of time from application (production of ID) to the provision of non-identifying (Table 18). This area (Donegal/SLWC) reported an increase of 14 weeks between Q2 and Q3. The service is working with HR to address staffing deficits in this area.

**Table 18: Length of time (weeks) from application to the provision of non-identifying information**

| Area                | Length of Time (weeks) Q3 2016 | Length of Time (weeks) Q4 2016 | Length of Time (weeks) Q1 2017 | Length of Time (weeks) Q2 2017 | Length of Time (weeks) Q3 2017 |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Dublin Mid Leinster | 4                              | 10                             | 7                              | 7                              | 7                              |
| Dublin North East   | 4                              | 4                              | 4                              | 4                              | 8                              |
| Cork/Kerry          | 6                              | 4                              | 6                              | 6                              | 8                              |
| CW/KK/ST/WD/WX      | 8                              | 6                              | 6                              | 6                              | 6                              |
| Midwest             | 8                              | 8                              | 8                              | 8                              | 8                              |
| Galway/Roscommon    | 8                              | 8                              | 6                              | 6                              | 6                              |
| Mayo                | 1                              | 1                              | 1                              | 1                              | 1                              |
| Donegal/SLWC        | 8                              | 8                              | 8                              | 6                              | 20                             |

- At the end of Q3 2017:
  - the length of time from application (production of ID) to allocation of a social worker for priority 1 applications ranged from 1 month to 12 months against a target of 3 months or less (Table 19). Four of the eight services are meeting the target.
  - the length of time from application (production of ID) to allocation of a social worker for priority 2 applications ranged from 6 weeks to 16 months against a target of 6 months or less. All services but one (Dublin North East) are meeting this target (Table 19).
  - the length of time from application (production of ID) to allocation of a social worker for all other applications ranged from 3 months to 39 months against a target of 12 months or less. Five of the eight services are meeting this target (Table 19).

**Table 19: Length of time (months) from application to allocation of a social worker, by priority type**

| Area                | Priority 1 Applications Waiting time (mths) | Priority 2 Applications Waiting time (mths) | All other Applications (mths) |
|---------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Dublin Mid Leinster | 2   | 2   | 3                             |
| Dublin North East   | 5   | 16  | 39                            |
| Cork/Kerry          | 12  | 6 weeks                                     | 30                            |
| CW/KK/ST/WD/WX      | 6   | 6   | 14                            |

|                                  |   |   |    |
|----------------------------------|---|---|----|
| Midwest                          | 1 | 3 | 9  |
| Galway/Roscommon                 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Mayo                             | 1 | 1 | 4  |
| Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan | 4 | 4 | 4  |

### 3.3.2 Adoption Assessments

- 41 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received during Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 138 (Table 20). The highest number were for inter-country adoption (n= 65; 47%) followed by step-parent adoption (n=31; 22%).

**Table 20: Number of receipted completed adoption application packs received in the quarter**

| Area                   | No receipted completed applications for adoption received Q1 2017 | No receipted completed applications for adoption received Q2 2017 | No receipted completed applications for adoption received Q3 2017 | Total (YTD) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|-------------|
| Fostering to Adoption  | 5   | 4   | 9   | 18          |
| Inter-Country Adoption | 22  | 25  | 18  | 65          |
| Domestic Adoption      | 10  | 9   | 5   | 24          |
| Step-parent adoption   | 10  | 12  | 9   | 31          |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>47</b>   | <b>50</b>   | <b>41</b>   | <b>138</b>  |

- 49 new children were referred for adoption in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 142 (Table 21). The highest number (n=66; 46%) were for step-adoption.

**Table 21: Number of new children referred for adoption in the quarter**

| Area                  | New children referred going forward for adoption Q1 2017 | New children referred going forward for adoption Q2 2017 | New children referred going forward for adoption Q3 2017 | Total (YTD) |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|-------------|
| Fostering to Adoption | 14   | 8  | 34   | 56          |
| Domestic Adoption     | 12   | 5  | 3  | 20          |
| Step-parent adoption  | 23   | 31   | 12   | 66          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>49</b>  | <b>44</b>  | <b>49</b>  | <b>142</b>  |

- 34 completed assessments (all types) were presented to Local Adoption Committees during Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 109 (Table 22). Highest number were for inter-country adoption (n=52; 48%) followed by step-parent adoption (n=31; 28%).

**Table 22: Completed assessments presented to Local Adoption Committees, by type**

| Area                   | No of completed assessments presented to LAC Q1 2017 | No of completed assessments presented to LAC Q2 2017 | No of completed assessments presented to LAC Q3 2017 | Total (YTD) |
|------------------------|--|--|--|-------------|
| Fostering to Adoption  | 3  | 8  | 2  | 13          |
| Inter-Country Adoption | 13   | 22   | 17   | 52          |
| Domestic Adoption      | 7  | 3  | 3  | 13          |
| Step-parent adoption   | 9  | 10   | 12   | 31          |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>32</b>  | <b>43</b>  | <b>34</b>  | <b>109</b>  |

### 3.4 FOSTER CARERS

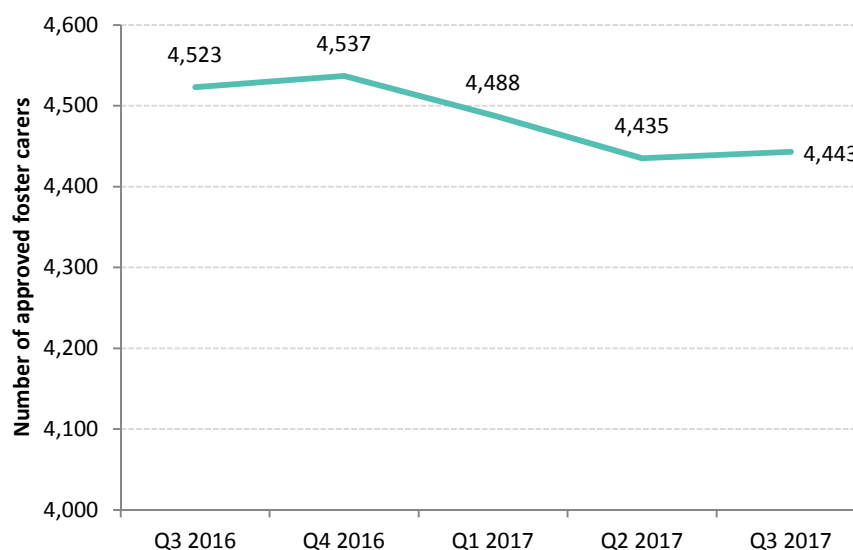
#### KEY FACTS

- 4,443 foster carers on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q3 2017; eight more than Q2 but 80 fewer than Q3 2016
- 79% (n=1,171/1,473) of relative foster carers approved against a target of 80%
- 92% (n=2,571) of general foster carers had an allocated link (target 90%), up two percentage points on Q2. A total of 235 awaiting, 59 fewer than Q2 2017
- 88% (n=1,034) of approved relative foster carers had an allocated link worker (target of 85%), up one percentage point on Q2. Total of 137 awaiting allocation, 22 fewer than Q2 2017
- 302 unapproved relative foster carers; nine fewer than Q2 2017
- 258 (85%) of the unapproved relative foster carers had a child placed with them for longer than 12 weeks; 13 fewer than Q2 2017
- 80% (n=207) of unapproved relative foster carers with a child placed > 12 weeks had an allocated link (social) worker; 51 awaiting allocation, 17 fewer than Q2 2017

#### 3.4.1 Number of foster carers

- 4,443 foster carers (all types minus Brussels II Regulation) on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q3 2017; eight more than Q2 2017 but 80 fewer than Q3 2016 (Figure 25). There were 302 unapproved relative foster carers. Seventy-nine percent (n=1,171/1,473) of relative foster carers are approved against a target of 80%.

**Figure 25: Number of approved foster carers (all types minus Brussels II Regulation) Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**



- 63% (n=2,806) of all approved foster carers are general foster carers. Relative foster carers (approved) account for a further 26% (n=1,171) while private foster carers account for the remaining 10% (n=466) (Table 23).

- The number of approved general and relative foster carers dropped by one and eight respectively between Q2 and Q3 2017, while the number of private foster carers increased by 17.

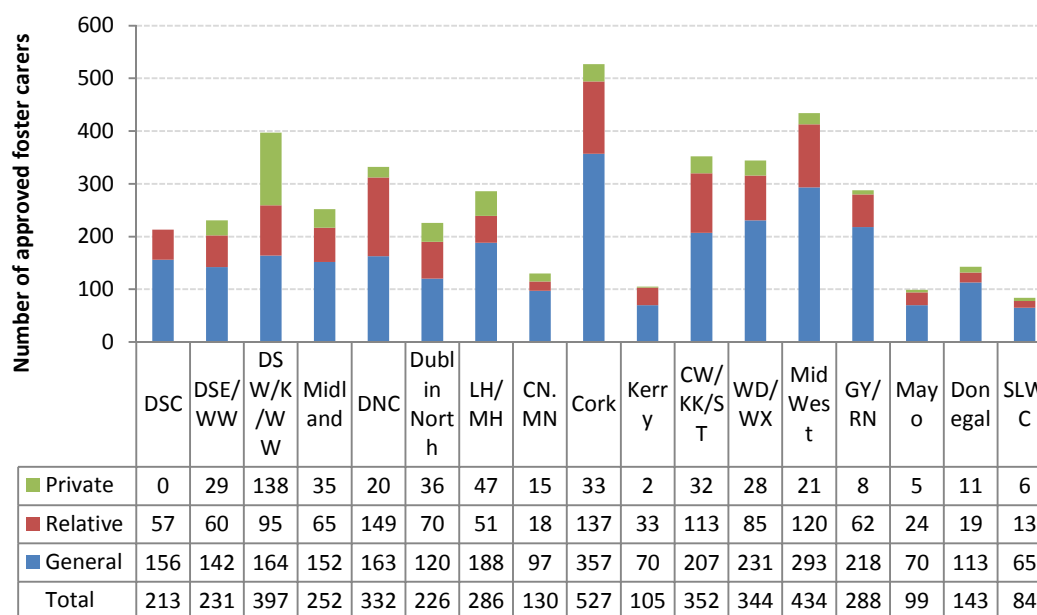
**Table 23: Breakdown of foster carers by type Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**

| Foster Carers                | Q3 2016 | Q4 2016 | Q1 2017 | Q2 2017 | Q3 2017 | Δ (+/-)<br>Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|
| <b>General (Approved)</b>    | 2,956   | 2,913   | 2,879   | 2,807   | 2,806   | -1                      |
| <b>Relative (Approved)</b>   | 1,204   | 1,221   | 1,196   | 1,179   | 1,171   | -8                      |
| <b>Private (Approved)</b>    | 363     | 403     | 413     | 449     | 466     | +17                     |
| <b>Total Approved</b>        | 4,523   | 4,537   | 4,488   | 4,435   | 4,443   | +8                      |
| <b>Relative (Unapproved)</b> | 348     | 356     | 328     | 311     | 302     | -9                      |

### 3.4.2 Foster carers approved and on the Panel of Approved Foster Carers

- The number of foster carers approved (all types) and on the panel ranged from 527 in Cork to 84 in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan at the end of Q3 2017 (Figure 26).

**Figure 26: Foster carers approved by type and area on the panel of approved foster carers, Q3 2017**



\*Figure for private carers provided by DSE/WW includes private carers for Dublin South Central

- Eight areas reported an increase from Q2 2017 in the number of foster carers approved and on the panel. The highest increase was reported by LH/MH (n=13) followed by Dublin South Central (n=11) (Table 24).
- Five reported a decrease from Q2 2017. The highest decrease was reported by CW/KK/ST (n=19) followed by Dublin North City (n=10), Kerry (n=6), Donegal (n=6) and CN/MN (n=2). The remaining four areas reported no change from Q2 2017.

**Table 24: Area breakdown of approved foster carers (all types), Q3 2016 – Q3 2017**

| Area            | Q3 2016      | Q4 2016      | Q1 2017      | Q2 2017      | Q3 2017      | Δ (+/-) Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| DSC             | 226          | 224          | 214          | 202          | 213          | 11                   |
| DSE/WW          | 224          | 232          | 227          | 226          | 231          | 5                    |
| DSW/K/WW        | 391          | 396          | 401          | 397          | 397          | 0                    |
| Midland         | 240          | 243          | 245          | 249          | 252          | 3                    |
| DNC             | 347          | 347          | 341          | 342          | 332          | -10                  |
| Dublin North    | 238          | 240          | 225          | 226          | 226          | 0                    |
| LH/MH           | 256          | 256          | 252          | 273          | 286          | 13                   |
| CN/MN           | 147          | 139          | 132          | 132          | 130          | -2                   |
| Cork            | 540          | 544          | 546          | 518          | 527          | 9                    |
| Kerry           | 116          | 114          | 114          | 111          | 105          | -6                   |
| CW/KK/ST        | 376          | 371          | 372          | 371          | 352          | -19                  |
| WD/WX           | 358          | 370          | 348          | 342          | 344          | 2                    |
| MidWest         | 401          | 419          | 420          | 427          | 434          | 7                    |
| GY/RN           | 329          | 317          | 321          | 287          | 288          | 1                    |
| Mayo            | 103          | 95           | 97           | 99           | 99           | 0                    |
| Donegal         | 150          | 149          | 150          | 149          | 143          | -6                   |
| SLWC            | 81           | 81           | 83           | 84           | 84           | 0                    |
| <b>National</b> | <b>4,523</b> | <b>4,537</b> | <b>4,488</b> | <b>4,435</b> | <b>4,443</b> | <b>8</b>             |

\*Figures revised since publication of the Q2 2016 Integrated performance and Activity Report

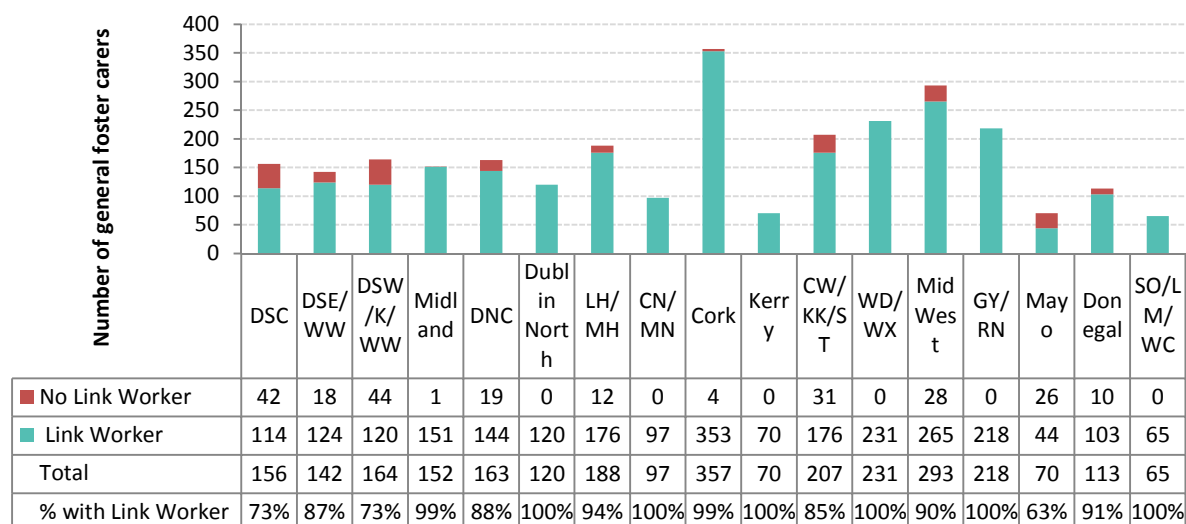
- 92% (n=2,571) of general foster carers approved and on the Panel had an allocated link (social) worker against a target of 90% at the end of Q3 2017, up two percentage points on Q2 2017. A total of 235 carers were awaiting an allocated worker; 59 fewer than Q2 2017. Eleven areas reported a percentage of 90% or higher with six of these areas reporting 100% (Table 25).
- DSW/K/WW reported the highest number (n=44, up 5 on Q2 2017) of foster carers awaiting a link working followed by Dublin South Central (n=42, up 19 on Q2); CW/KK/ST (n=31, down 19 on Q2); MidWest (n=28, down 13 on Q2) and Mayo (n=26, up 12 on Q2).
- Six areas reported a decrease in carers awaiting an allocated link worker from Q2; the highest decrease was reported by WD/WX (n=37) followed by Midland (n=30) and CW/KK/ST (n=19).
- Seven areas reported an increase from Q2 2017; the highest increase was reported by Dublin South Central (n=19) followed by Mayo (n=12) and Dublin North City (n=10).

**Table 25: General foster carers (approved) with/awaiting link social worker, Q2 2017 – Q3 2017**

| Area     | With Link Worker Q2 2017 | Awaiting Link Worker Q2 2017 | % With Link Worker Q2 2017 | With Link Worker Q3 2017 | Awaiting Link Worker Q3 2017 | % With Link Worker Q3 2017 | Δ +/- No. Awaiting Link Worker Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|----------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| DSC      | 124                      | 23                           | 84%                        | 114                      | 42                           | 73%                        | 19  |
| DSE/WW   | 128                      | 16                           | 89%                        | 124                      | 18                           | 87%                        | 2   |
| DSW/K/WW | 128                      | 39                           | 77%                        | 120                      | 44                           | 73%                        | 5   |

|                 |              |            |            |              |            |            |            |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Midland         | 121          | 31         | 80%        | 151          | 1          | 99%        | -30        |
| DNC             | 156          | 9          | 95%        | 144          | 19         | 88%        | 10         |
| Dublin North    | 117          | 3          | 98%        | 120          | 0          | 100%       | -3         |
| LH/MH           | 171          | 11         | 94%        | 176          | 12         | 94%        | 1          |
| CN/MN           | 95           | 0          | 100%       | 97           | 0          | 100%       | 0          |
| Cork            | 348          | 3          | 99%        | 353          | 4          | 99%        | 1          |
| Kerry           | 72           | 0          | 100%       | 70           | 0          | 100%       | 0          |
| CW/KK/ST        | 171          | 50         | 77%        | 176          | 31         | 85%        | -19        |
| WD/WX           | 193          | 37         | 84%        | 231          | 0          | 100%       | -37        |
| MidWest         | 247          | 41         | 86%        | 265          | 28         | 90%        | -13        |
| GY/RN           | 219          | 0          | 100%       | 218          | 0          | 100%       | 0          |
| Mayo            | 55           | 14         | 80%        | 44           | 26         | 63%        | 12         |
| Donegal         | 103          | 17         | 86%        | 103          | 10         | 91%        | -7         |
| SO/LM/WC        | 65           | 0          | 100%       | 65           | 0          | 100%       | 0          |
| <b>National</b> | <b>2,513</b> | <b>294</b> | <b>90%</b> | <b>2,571</b> | <b>235</b> | <b>92%</b> | <b>-59</b> |

Figure 27: General foster carers approved and on the panel with/awaiting a link (social worker), Q3 2017

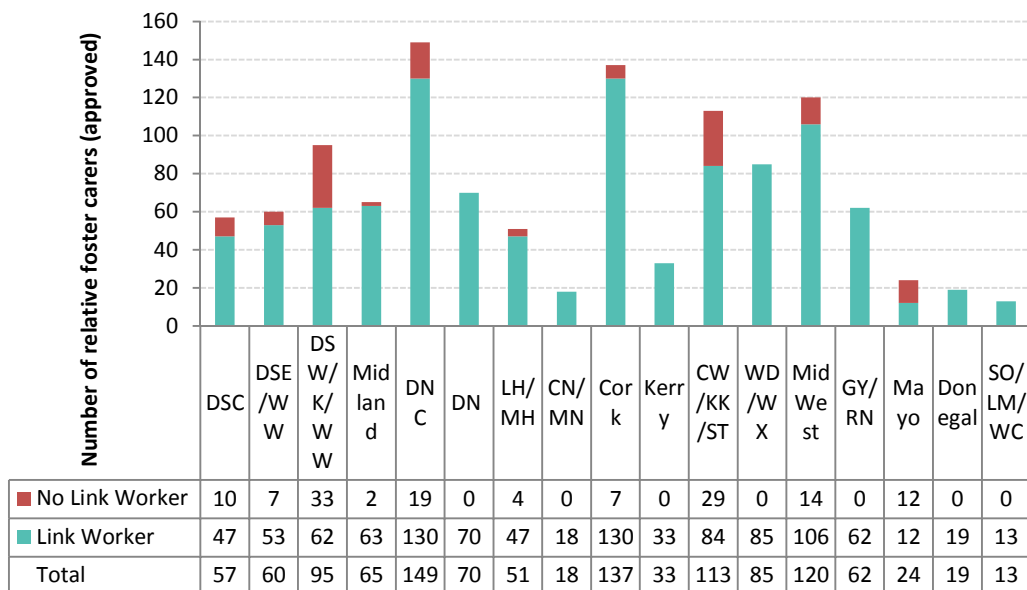


- 88% (n=1,034) of relative foster carers approved and on the panel had an allocated link (social) worker at the end of Q3 2017 against a target of 85%, up one percentage point on Q2
- A total of 137 carers were awaiting an allocated link worker, 22 fewer than Q2 2017.
- Thirteen areas reported a percentage of 85% (target) or higher with seven of these areas reporting 100% (Table 26).
- DSW/K/WW reported the highest number (n=33 down 4 on Q2 2017) awaiting a link worker followed by CW/KK/ST (n=29 down 13 on Q2 2017).
- Seven areas reported a decrease in the number awaiting from Q2 2017; highest decrease reported by Midlands area (n=14) followed by CW/KK/ST (n=13).

Table 26: Relative foster carers (approved) with/awaiting link social worker, Q2 2017 – Q3 2017

| Area            | With Link Worker Q2 2017 | Awaiting Link Worker Q2 2017 | % With Link Worker Q2 2017 | With Link Worker Q3 2017 | Awaiting Link Worker Q3 2017 | % With Link Worker Q3 2017 | Δ +/- Number Awaiting Link Worker Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| DSC             | 45                       | 10                           | 82%                        | 47                       | 10                           | 82%                        | 0  |
| DSE/WW          | 47                       | 9                            | 84%                        | 53                       | 7                            | 88%                        | -2   |
| DSW/K/WW        | 58                       | 37                           | 61%                        | 62                       | 33                           | 65%                        | -4   |
| Midland         | 47                       | 16                           | 75%                        | 63                       | 2                            | 97%                        | -14  |
| DNC             | 148                      | 10                           | 94%                        | 130                      | 19                           | 87%                        | 9  |
| Dublin North    | 61                       | 9                            | 87%                        | 70                       | 0                            | 100%                       | -9   |
| LH/MH           | 44                       | 5                            | 90%                        | 47                       | 4                            | 92%                        | -1   |
| CN/MN           | 22                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 18                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 0  |
| Cork            | 132                      | 2                            | 99%                        | 130                      | 7                            | 95%                        | 5  |
| Kerry           | 36                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 33                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 0  |
| CW/KK/ST        | 78                       | 42                           | 65%                        | 84                       | 29                           | 74%                        | -13  |
| WD/WX           | 83                       | 2                            | 98%                        | 85                       | 0                            | 100%                       | -2   |
| MidWest         | 107                      | 12                           | 90%                        | 106                      | 14                           | 88%                        | 2  |
| GY/RN           | 60                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 62                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 0  |
| Mayo            | 20                       | 5                            | 80%                        | 12                       | 12                           | 50%                        | 7  |
| Donegal         | 19                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 19                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 0  |
| SO/LM/WC        | 13                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 13                       | 0                            | 100%                       | 0  |
| <b>National</b> | <b>1,020</b>             | <b>159</b>                   | <b>87%</b>                 | <b>1,034</b>             | <b>137</b>                   | <b>88%</b>                 | <b>-22</b>                                     |

Figure 28: Relative foster carers approved and on the panel with/awaiting allocated link Q3 2017



### 3.4.3 Foster carers (relative) unapproved

- 302 relative foster carers unapproved at the end of Q3 2017, down nine on Q2 (Table 27)
- Of these 258 (85%) had a child placed with them for longer than 12 weeks, down 13 on Q2
- Of the 258 foster carers who had a child placed with them for >12 weeks, 80% (n=207) had an allocated link (social) worker at the end of Q3 2017, up five percentage points on Q2. A total of 51 carers were awaiting allocation of a link worker, 17 fewer than Q2 2017

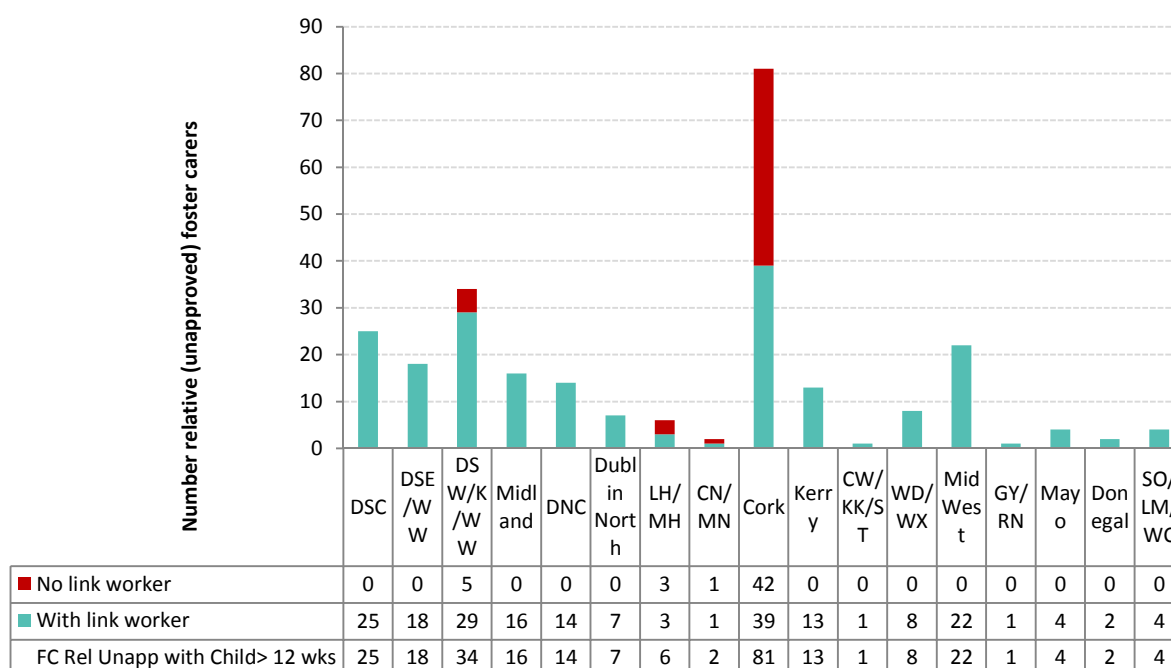
Table 27: Breakdown of foster carers not approved, Q3 2016 – Q3 2017

| Unapproved Relative Foster Carers       | Q3 2016 | Q4 2016 | Q1 2017 | Q2 2017 | Q3 2017 | Δ (+/-) Q3 v Q2 2017 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| No. unapproved                          | 348     | 356     | 328     | 311     | 302     | -9                   |
| No (%) with a child > 12 weeks          | 300     | 308     | 276     | 271     | 258     | -13                  |
|   | 87%     | 87%     | 84%     | 87%     | (85%)   |                      |
| Child > 12 weeks and have a Link Worker | 209     | 211     | 193     | 203*    | 207     | +4                   |
|   | 70%     | 69%     | 70%     | 75%     | 80%     |                      |
| Child > 12 weeks AWAITING Link Worker   | 91      | 97      | 83      | 68*     | 51      | -17                  |

\*Figure amended from previous report (Q2 2017) published

- Cork had the highest number (n=81, up 6 from Q2) of unapproved relative foster carers with a child placed for longer than 12 weeks, at the end of Q3 2017 (Figure 29).
- In 13 areas all unapproved relative foster carers with a child for >12 weeks had a link worker (Figure 29). With the exception of Cork five or fewer carers were awaiting an allocated link worker in the remaining four areas.
- Cork accounted for 82% (n=42) of unapproved relative foster carers awaiting a link worker for longer than 12 weeks at the end of Q3 2017.

Figure 29: Relative foster carers UNAPPROVED with a child > 12 weeks, with/awaiting a link worker, Q3 2017



### 3.5 HIQA INSPECTIONS

#### FOSTER CARE

The Health Information and Quality Authority (Hiqa) published seven inspection reports in Q3 2017. The summary of judgments is set out in Table 28 and a summary of findings can be found in Appendix I.

**Table 28: Foster Care Inspections - Summary Judgments**

| Centre Inspected         | Summary of Judgments     |           |                         |                       |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | No of Standards Assessed | Compliant | Substantially Compliant | Non Compliant - Major | Non Compliant - Moderate |
| Cork                     | 8 (Themed)               | 0         | 2                       | 5                     | 1                        |
| North Dublin             | 8 (Themed)               | 0         | 4                       | 3                     | 1                        |
| Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan | 8 (Themed)               | 0         | 2                       | 3                     | 3                        |
| Galway/Roscommon         | 8 (Themed)               | 1         | 3                       | 0                     | 4                        |
| Kerry                    | 8 (Themed)               | 3         | 1                       | 3                     | 1                        |
| MidWest                  | 8 (Themed)               | 0         | 3                       | 3                     | 2                        |
| Mayo                     | 8 (Themed)               | 2         | 5                       | 0                     | 1                        |

#### CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Hiqa published five inspection reports in Q3 2017. The summary of judgments is set out in Table 29 and a summary of findings for each centre inspected can be found in Appendix I.

**Table 29: Residential Centres Inspection - Summary Judgments**

| Centre Inspected | Summary of Judgments     |           |                         |                       |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
|                  | No of Standards Assessed | Compliant | Substantially Compliant | Non Compliant - Major | Non Compliant - Moderate |
| OSV 0004161      | 10<br>(Unannounced/Full) | 1         | 2                       | 1                     | 6                        |
| OSV 0004176      | 10<br>(Unannounced/Full) | 2         | 2                       | 0                     | 6                        |
| OSV 0004178      | 10<br>(Unannounced/Full) | 2         | 4                       | 0                     | 4                        |
| OSV 0004177      | 10<br>(Unannounced/Full) | 3         | 2                       | 1                     | 4                        |
| OSV 0004650      | 8 (Announced/Full)       | 1         | 1                       | 1                     | 7                        |

## 4.0 REGULATION AND SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

#### 4.1 Early Years Inspectorate

#### 4.2 Alternative Education Regulation

#### 4.3 Statutory / Non-Statutory Alternative Care Services

### 4.1 EARLY YEARS INSPECTORATE

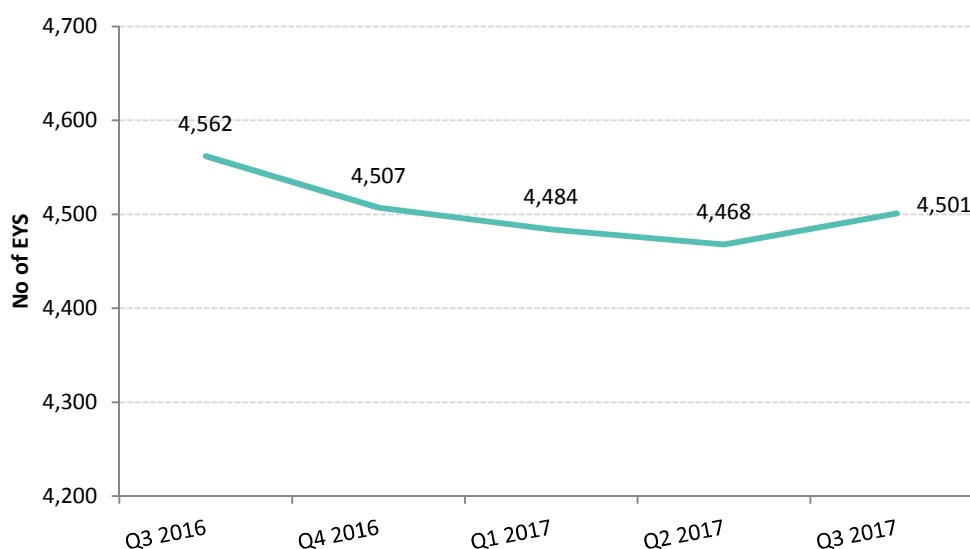
#### KEY FACTS

- 4,501 EYS on the register nationally at the end of Q3 2017; 33 more than Q2 2017
- 550 EYS inspections (all types) carried out during Q3 2017; 79 (17%) more than Q2 2017
- 54 complaints received in respect of EYS during Q3 2017; 44 fewer than Q2 2017

#### 4.1.1 Activity Data

- 4,501 early years services (EYS) on the register nationally at the end of Q3 2017; 33 more than Q2 2017.

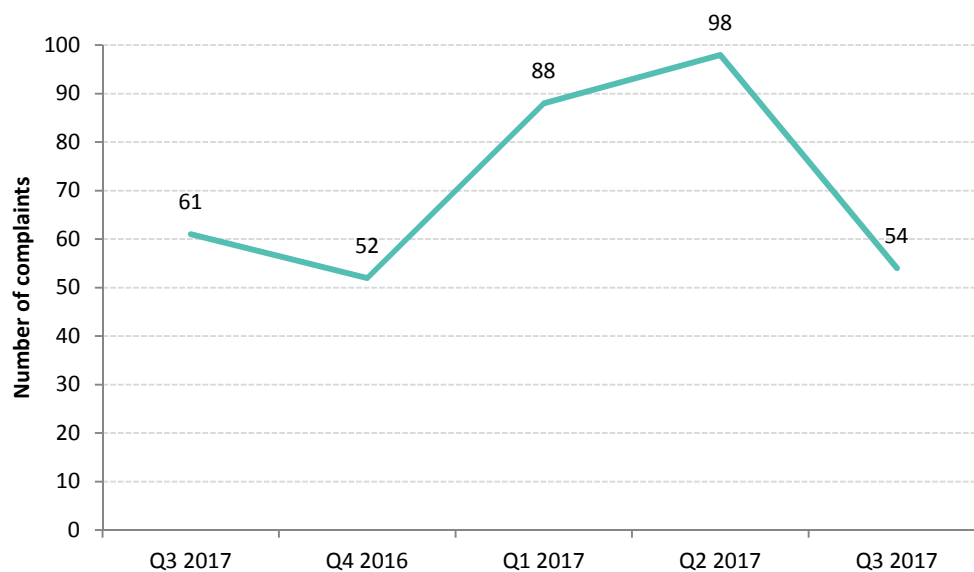
Figure 30: Number of Early Years Services on the Early Years Inspectorate Register



- 33 new applications to become a registered provider received by the Inspectorate in Q3 2017, two more than Q2 2017. This brings to 80 the total number received for the first nine months of 2017.
- 63 new applications approved by the Inspectorate in Q3 2017; 58 more than Q2 2017. This brings to 74 the total number approved for the first nine months of 2017.

- 694 “change in circumstances” notifications received by the Inspectorate in Q3 2017; 274 more than Q2 2017. This brings to 1,470 the total number received for the first nine months of 2017.
- 25 services were found to have closed in Q3 2017, bringing the total number for the first six months of 2017 to 77.
- 550 inspections (all types<sup>13</sup>) carried out in Q3 2017; 79 (17%) more than Q2 2017. This brings to 1,401 the total number of inspections carried out for the first nine months of 2017.
- 54 complaints relating to EYS received by the Inspectorate during Q3 2017; 44 fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 240 the number of complaints for the first nine months of 2017.

**Figure 31: Number of complaints relating to EYS received**



- 28 incidents notified to the Inspectorate in Q3 2017, six fewer than Q2 2017. This brings to 140 the number of incidents notified for the first nine months of 2017.
- No service de-registered by Tusla during the first nine months of 2017.
- No prosecutions of EYS taken by Tusla during the first nine months of 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Includes initial, follow up, complaints, focused inspections or fit for purpose inspections

## 4.2 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION REGULATION

### Key Facts

#### Home Education

- 1,400 children on the register for home education at the end of Q3 2017
- 167 applications for home education during Q2 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 413
- 236 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q3 2017; 76 more than Q2
- 745 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q3 2017; 33 fewer than Q2

#### Independent Schools

- 4,825 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q3 2017
- 24 children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 307
- 44 children registered during Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,078
- 936 children awaiting registration at the end of Q3 2017; 27 fewer than Q2

### Under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare)<sup>14</sup> Act 2000

#### Home Education

- 1,400 children on the register for home education at the end of Q3 2017; 17 more than Q2 2017
- 16% (n=222) of children on the register have special educational needs
- 167 applications received for home education during Q3 2017 bringing the total for the first 9 months of 2017 to 413. Almost one in four (23%; 38/167) applications were for children with special educational needs
- 114 assessments (all types) for home education carried out in Q3 2017 bringing the total for the first 9 months of 2017 to 412
- 71 children registered for home education<sup>15</sup> in Q3 2017 bringing the total for the first 9 months of 2017 to 246

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<sup>14</sup> Section 14 Education (Welfare) Act 2000 14.—(1) The Board shall, on the commencement of this section, cause to be established and maintained a register of all children in receipt of education in a place other than a recognised school (hereafter in this section referred to as ‘the register’). (2) Subject to subsection (3), where a parent chooses to educate, or have educated, his or her child in a place other than a recognised school he or she shall, in accordance with this section, apply to the Board to have the child concerned registered in the register.

(5) As soon as practicable after an application under this section is received by the Board, the Board shall, for the purpose of determining whether the child is receiving a certain minimum education, cause an authorised person to carry out, in consultation with the parent who made the application, an assessment of—...

<sup>15</sup> Number registered in a quarter does not reflect the number of assessments carried out in the previous quarter – reports are written, reviewed and approved internally before registration

- 236 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q3 2017; 76 more than Q2 2017. Of these 224 are awaiting a preliminary<sup>16</sup> assessment and 12 are awaiting a comprehensive assessment.
- 745 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q3 2017; 42 fewer than Q2 2017
- Five children were refused registration for home education in Q3 2017 bringing the total number refused for the first 9 months of 2017 to 14. In the first nine months of 2017 there were two appeals made against decisions not to register
- 54 children removed from the register in Q3 2017 bringing the total number for the first 9 months of 2017 to 168. Breakdown of the 168 is as follows: 79 (47%) turned 18 years; 59 (35%) returned to school; 17 (10%) left Ireland; 11 were referred to Educational Welfare Services<sup>17</sup>; 1 was Deregistered and 1 Other reason.

### Independent Schools

- 4,825 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q3 2017; 10 more than Q2 2017
- 24 new children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q3 2017 bringing the total for the first 9 months of 2017 to 307.
- 44 children registered<sup>18</sup> during Q3 2017 bringing the total for the first 9 months of 2017 to 1,078
- No children refused registration in the first nine months of 2017
- 936 children awaiting registration at the end of Q3 2017, 27 fewer than Q2 2017 – *due to issues relating to internal capacity or where information is awaited from the parents e.g., birth certs, signed application form*
- 195 children removed from the register during Q3 2017 bringing the total number for the first 9 months of 2017 to 827 – *children are automatically removed from the register when they reach 18 years. No capacity to follow-up children who move to a new school.*
- 42 schools awaiting a review at the end of Q3 2017.

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<sup>16</sup> This figure includes children currently going through the assessment process where the assessment is complete but the report has not been signed off

<sup>17</sup> Children who cannot be located are referred to Educational Welfare Services

<sup>18</sup> Number of children registered includes the processing of applications forms received in previous months. Once a school has been assessed children are registered automatically once parents have supplied all required documentation

### 4.3 NON STATUTORY ALTERNATIVE CARE SERVICES

#### Key Facts

- 115 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q3 2017
- 19 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 70
- 6 non statutory foster care services at the end of Q3 2017

#### Non Statutory Children’s Residential Centres

- 115 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q3 2017
- 19 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q3 2017 bringing the total for 2017 YTD to 70.

**Table 30: Inspections of Non Statutory Residential Services**

| Inspections by Type                      | Q1 2017   | Q2 2017   | Q3 2017   | Total     |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Thematic Inspection (announced)</b>   | 14        | 19        | 9         | 42        |
| <b>Thematic Inspection (unannounced)</b> | 8         | 3         | 5         | 16        |
| <b>Lead Inspector Agency Visit</b>       | 0         | 3         | 2         | 5         |
| <b>New Registration Inspection Visit</b> | 0         | 4         | 3         | 7         |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>22</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>70</b> |

#### Non Statutory Foster Care Services

- 6 non-statutory foster care services at the end of Q3 2017

## 5.0 EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES

### KEY FACTS

- 3,522 new individual children worked with in the academic 2016/2017
- 960 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Sept 2017; 201 fewer than August 2017
- 721 school attendance notices (SANs) issued in respect of 485 children under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000<sup>1</sup>, in the academic 2016/2017
- 156 summonses issued in respect of 109 children under Section 25 of the Act, in the academic 2016/2017
- 216 Section 24 meetings convened by EWOs, in the academic 2016/2017

### Referrals<sup>19</sup>

#### Academic Year 2016 / 2017

- 5,939 referrals screened by senior educational welfare officers, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017 (Table 31).
- 3,377 referrals allocated to educational welfare officers (EWOs), Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- 1,108 referrals screened out / required no further action, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- 1,161 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Aug 2017

**Table 31: Referrals activity data by month**

|                | Referrals Screened | Referrals Allocated | Referrals Screened Out | Screened Referrals on Waiting List (month end) |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Sep-16</b>  | 368                | 234                 | 100                    | 208  |
| <b>Oct-16</b>  | 304                | 207                 | 37                     | 260  |
| <b>Nov-16</b>  | 392                | 289                 | 67                     | 259  |
| <b>Dec-16</b>  | 443                | 296                 | 74                     | 282  |
| <b>Jan-17</b>  | 512                | 393                 | 78                     | 231  |
| <b>Feb-17</b>  | 641                | 477                 | 100                    | 317  |
| <b>Mar-17</b>  | 766                | 506                 | 103                    | 423  |
| <b>Apr-17</b>  | 594                | 303                 | 75                     | 588  |
| <b>May-17</b>  | 741                | 269                 | 158                    | 880  |
| <b>Jun-17</b>  | 679                | 215                 | 67                     | 1,273  |
| <b>July-17</b> | 311                | 84                  | 86                     | 1,288  |
| <b>Aug-17</b>  | 188                | 104                 | 163                    | 1,161  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>5,939</b>       | <b>3,377</b>        | <b>1,108</b>           | <b>-</b>                                       |

<sup>19</sup> A referral is a written notification of concern to EWS from a school, a parent, agency or concerned citizen in relation to the educational welfare of a named child. Referrals are then screened against a set of criteria by the Senior Educational Welfare Officer and a decision is made as to whether to proceed and open a case in relation this named child, or placed on a waiting list if there is an EWS capacity issue.

### Academic Year 2017 / 2018 (Sept 2017)

- 218 referrals screened by senior educational welfare officers in Sept 2017
- 177 referrals allocated to educational welfare officers (EWOs) in Sept 2017
- 16 referrals screened out / required no further action in Sept 2017
- 960 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Sept 2017; 201 fewer than August 2017

### Open Cases / Cases Worked

#### Academic Year 2016 / 2017

- 3,522 new individual children worked with, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- 4,422 new cases assigned to EWOs between Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- 3,902 cases closed between Sept 2016 and Aug 2017

**Table 32: Cases open, assigned and closed by month**

|              | Open Cases on hand/brought forward | New Cases Assigned | Cases Closed |
|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Sep-16       | 2,593                              | 374                | 364          |
| Oct-16       | 2,603                              | 334                | 353          |
| Nov-16       | 2,584                              | 450                | 425          |
| Dec-16       | 2,609                              | 347                | 285          |
| Jan-17       | 2,671                              | 389                | 300          |
| Feb-17       | 2,760                              | 567                | 404          |
| Mar-17       | 2,923                              | 598                | 295          |
| Apr-17       | 3,226                              | 352                | 194          |
| May-17       | 3,384                              | 405                | 383          |
| Jun-17       | 3,406                              | 265                | 537          |
| Jul-17       | 3,134                              | 129                | 239          |
| Aug-17       | 3,024                              | 212                | 123          |
| <b>Total</b> | -                                  | <b>4,422</b>       | <b>3,902</b> |

### Academic Year 2017 / 2018 (Sept 2017)

- 167 new individual children worked with, Sept 2017
- 297 new cases assigned to EWOs between in Sept 2017
- 300 cases closed between in Sept 2017

## School Attendance Notices and Summonses under Section 25

### Academic Year 2016 / 2017

- 721 school attendance notices (SANs) issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000<sup>20</sup>, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017. The notices issued were in respect of 485 individual children i.e., more than one notice was issued in respect of some children.
- 156 summonses issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare Act) 2000, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017. The summonses issued were in respect of 109 individual children i.e., more than one summons was issued in respect some children.
- EWOs attended 408 court cases pertaining to their own cases between Sept 2016 – Aug 2017 and an additional 23 court cases in a supporting capacity (e.g., at the request of social work services).
- 235 child protection conferences (CPC) attended by EWOs between Sept 2016 – Aug 2017.
- 216 Section 24<sup>21</sup> meetings convened by EWOs, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- 196 official child protection and welfare referrals made by EWOs Sept 2016 – Aug 2017.

### Academic Year 2017 / 2018 (Sept 2017)

- 63 school attendance notices (SANs) issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Sept 2017. The notices issued were in respect of 41 individual children i.e., more than one notice was issued in respect of some children.
- 23 summonses issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare Act) 2000, Sept 2017. The summonses issued were in respect of 13 individual children i.e., more than one summons was issued in respect some children.
- EWOs attended 52 court cases pertaining to their own cases in Sept 2017 and an additional five court cases in a supporting capacity (e.g., at the request of social work services).
- 27 child protection conferences (CPC) attended by EWOs in Sept 2017.
- 20 Section 24 meetings convened by EWOs, Sept 2017

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<sup>20</sup> Section 25 Education (Welfare) Act 2000—(1) Subject to section 17(2), the Board shall, if of opinion that a parent is failing or neglecting to cause his or her child to attend a recognised school in accordance with this Act, serve a notice (hereafter in this section referred to as a ‘school attendance notice’) on such parent—(a) requiring him or her on the expiration of such period as is specified in the notice, to cause his or her child named in the notice to attend such recognised school as is specified in the notice, and there to attend on each school day that the notice is in force, and (b) informing him or her that if he or she fails to comply with a requirement under paragraph (a) he or she shall be guilty of an offence.

<sup>21</sup> Section 24 Education Welfare Act 2000: Where the board of management of a recognised school or a person acting on its behalf is of the opinion that a student should be expelled from that school it shall, before so expelling the student, notify the educational welfare officer to whom functions under this Act have been assigned, in writing, of its opinion and the reasons therefor. The educational welfare officer concerned shall, as soon as may be after receiving a notification under *subsection (1)*, make all reasonable efforts to ensure that provision is made for the continued education of the student to whom the notification relates.

- (2) For the purposes of *subsection (2)*, the educational welfare officer concerned shall, as soon as may be after receiving the said notification—
- (a) make all reasonable efforts to consult with the principal of the school concerned or a person nominated by him or her, the student concerned and his or her parents, and such other persons as the educational welfare officer considers appropriate, and
  - (b) convene a meeting attended by him or her of such of those persons as agree to attend such meeting.

- 16 official child protection and welfare referrals made by EWOs in Sept 2017.

## 6.0 FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

#### 5.1 Family Support Services

#### 5.2 Meitheal and Child & Family Support Networks

### 6.1 FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES<sup>22</sup>

#### KEY FACTS

*Data based on incomplete returns and should be considered provisional*

- At least 21,575 children in receipt of family support services at the end of June 2017
- At least 17,580 children referred to family support services between January and June 2017
- 72% (12,708) of children referred to family support services (Jan – Jun 2017) received a service

#### 6.1.1 Family Support Providers

*Data provisional – data for CW/KK/ST outstanding at the time of writing and partial data available from LH/M and Dublin North City.*

- At least 254 family support providers commissioned for 2017; the majority (85%; n=215) of which are external to Tusla (Table 33).
- 67% (n=169) of services provided data for Q1 – Q2 2017. Six areas reported 100%. The lowest percentage was reported by GY/RN (36%; n=10/28) followed by MidWest (44%; n=15/34). The data presented below needs to be interpreted in the context of missing data for areas concerned.

**Table 33: Family Support Services Commissioned by Area, 2017**

| Area         | Number of Family Support Providers Commissioned for 2017 | Number that are External to Tusla providers | Number that are Internal Tusla providers | Of the total number commissioned, the number that provided data for Jan- Jun 2017 | % that provided data for Jan- Jun 2017 |
|--------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| DSC          | 21   | 19  | 2  | 16  | 76%                                    |
| DSE/WW       | 17   | 11  | 6  | 17  | 100%                                   |
| DSW/K/WW     | 15   | 13  | 2  | 12  | 80%                                    |
| Midlands     | 14   | 12  | 2  | 13  | 93%                                    |
| DNC          | 24   | 20  |  |   |  |
| Dublin North | 19   | 18  | 1  | 15  | 79%                                    |
| LH/MH        |  |   |  |   |  |
| CN/MN        | 4  | 3   | 1  | 4   | 100%                                   |
| Cork         | 7  | 7   | 0  | 7   | 100%                                   |
| Kerry        | 5  | 4   | 1  | 5   | 100%                                   |

<sup>22</sup> Family Support Services includes those services funded through a Service Arrangement with the Child and Family Agency and those internally funded and delivered through the Child and Family Agency

| CW/KK/ST     |            |            |           |            |            |
|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| WD/WX        | 27         | 24         | 3         | 17         | 63%        |
| MidWest      | 34         | 31         | 3         | 15         | 44%        |
| GY/RN        | 28         | 18         | 10        | 10         | 36%        |
| Mayo         | 10         | 6          | 4         | 10         | 100%       |
| Donegal      | 17         | 17         | 0         | 17         | 100%       |
| SLWC         | 12         | 12         | 0         | 11         | 92%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>254</b> | <b>215</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>169</b> | <b>67%</b> |

### 6.1.2 Children in Receipt of Family Support Services

- At least 21,575 children in receipt of family support services at the end of June 2017. Highest number reported by MidWest (n=6,493; accounts for 30% of children in receipt of services) albeit that fewer than half of the services in this area provided data, followed by Donegal (n=2,735); Dublin North City and Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan both reporting 1,740 children. Fewest number reported by Cork (n=286) followed by Kerry (n=301) and Cavan/Monaghan (n=352) (Table 34).

**Table 34: Children in receipt of Family Support Services, end of June 2017**

| Area         | Total number of children in receipt of a FSS at the end of Dec 2016 | Total number of children in receipt of a FSS at the end of June 2017 |
|--------------|---|--|
| DSC          | 1,216   | 826  |
| DSE/WW       | 651   | 615  |
| DSW/K/WW     | 799   | 1,309  |
| Midlands     | 775   | 525  |
| DNC          | 1,487   | 1,740  |
| Dublin North | 1,544   | 1,355  |
| LH/MH        | 1,374   | 673  |
| CN/MN        | 236   | 352  |
| Cork         | 310   | 286  |
| Kerry        | 269   | 301  |
| CW/KK/ST     | 905   |  |
| WD/WX        | 1,145   | 956  |
| MidWest      | 6,373   | 6,493  |
| GY/RN        | 1,187   | 1,232  |
| Mayo         | 971   | 437  |
| Donegal      | 2,394   | 2,735  |
| SLWC         | 2,581   | 1,740  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>24,217</b>   | <b>21,575</b>  |

### 6.1.3 Children Referred to Family Support Services

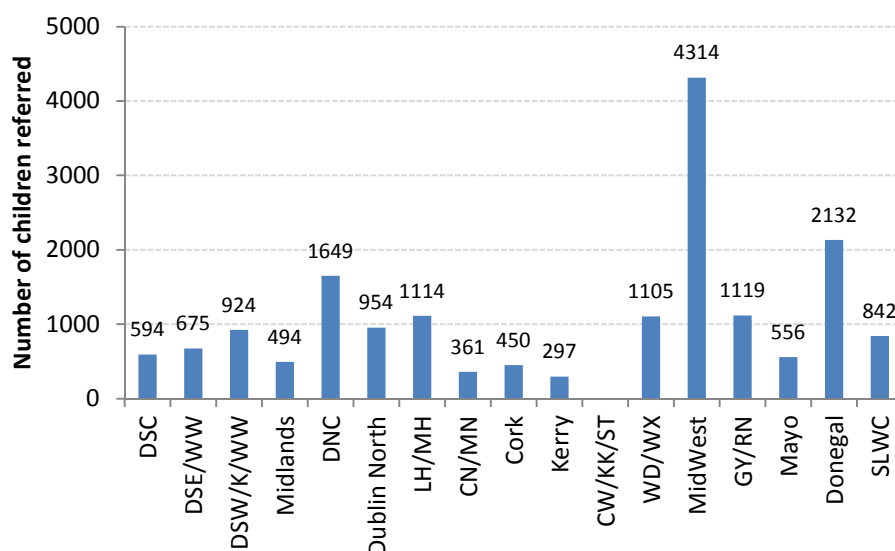
- 17,580 children referred to family support services between January and June 2017 (Table 35 and Figure 32). Highest number referred in the MidWest (n=4,314; 25% of all children referred) followed by Donegal (n=2,132) and Dublin North City (n=1,649). Fewest number

reported by Kerry (n=297) followed by CN/MN (n=361); Cork (n=450) and Midlands (n=494)

**Table 35: Children referred to Family Support Services by area**

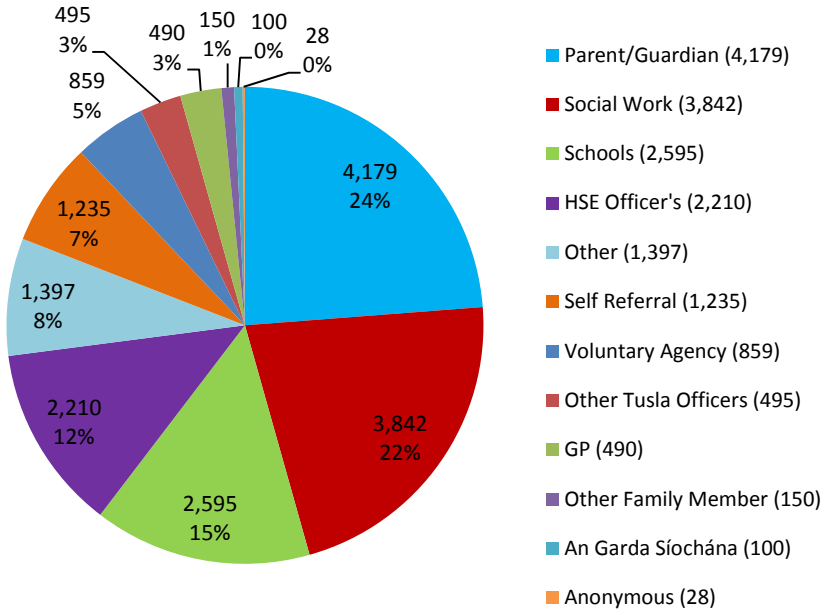
| Area         | Total number of children referred to FSS, Jul-Dec 2016 | Total number of children referred to FSS, Jan – Jun 2017 |
|--------------|--|--|
| DSC          | 984  | 594  |
| DSE/WW       | 679  | 675  |
| DSW/K/WW     | 640  | 924  |
| Midlands     | 477  | 494  |
| DNC          | 1,716  | 1,649  |
| Dublin North | 1,815  | 954  |
| LH/MH        | 940  | 1,114  |
| CN/MN        | 334  | 361  |
| Cork         | 304  | 450  |
| Kerry        | 235  | 297  |
| CW/KK/ST     | 404  |  |
| WD/WX        | 733  | 1,105  |
| MidWest      | 3,233  | 4,314  |
| GY/RN        | 1,234  | 1,119  |
| Mayo         | 513  | 556  |
| Donegal      | 984  | 2,132  |
| SLWC         | 1,134  | 842  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>16,359</b>  | <b>17,580</b>  |

**Figure 32: Children referred to Family Support Services by area**



- The most common source of referral was Parent/Guardian accounting for almost one in four referrals (n=4,179; 24%) followed by Tusla Social Work (n=3,842; 22%) and Schools (n=2,595; 15%). An Garda Síochána made 100 referrals, the highest number (n=35) of which were reported by Louth/Meath. Over half of the referrals from Schools (52%; n=1,350) were reported by the MidWest (Figure 33 and Table 36).

**Figure 33: Children referred to Family Support Services by source of referral, Jan - Jun 2017**



**Table 36: Breakdown of source of referrals by area, Jan - Jun 2017**

|                     | Social Work  | Other Tusla Officers | HSE Officers | An Garda Síochána | Self - Referral | Parent/Guardian | Other Family member | GP         | Voluntary Agency | Anonymous | Schools      | Other        | Total         |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>DSC</b>          | 137          | 14                   | 193          | 0                 | 48              | 194             | 3                   | 5          | 0                | 0         | 0            | 0            | <b>594</b>    |
| <b>DSE/WW</b>       | 193          | 7                    | 99           | 2                 | 6               | 209             | 7                   | 26         | 49               | 0         | 61           | 16           | <b>675</b>    |
| <b>DSW/K/WW</b>     | 248          | 44                   | 160          | 0                 | 35              | 223             | 17                  | 15         | 51               | 0         | 112          | 19           | <b>924</b>    |
| <b>Midlands</b>     | 165          | 36                   | 66           | 0                 | 49              | 52              | 5                   | 2          | 23               | 0         | 80           | 16           | <b>494</b>    |
| <b>DNC</b>          | 534          | 30                   | 203          | 5                 | 32              | 526             | 2                   | 22         | 48               | 0         | 215          | 32           | <b>1,649</b>  |
| <b>Dublin North</b> | 357          | 28                   | 134          | 0                 | 44              | 144             | 2                   | 21         | 86               | 0         | 54           | 84           | <b>954</b>    |
| <b>LH/MH</b>        | 243          | 31                   | 152          | 35                | 5               | 387             | 32                  | 20         | 77               | 1         | 60           | 71           | <b>1,114</b>  |
| <b>CN/MN</b>        | 185          | 3                    | 46           | 3                 | 3               | 9               | 2                   | 11         | 25               | 0         | 41           | 33           | <b>361</b>    |
| <b>Cork</b>         | 185          | 19                   | 29           | 0                 | 113             | 60              | 10                  | 0          | 6                | 0         | 18           | 10           | <b>450</b>    |
| <b>Kerry</b>        | 37           | 3                    | 21           | 7                 | 5               | 110             | 1                   | 23         | 20               | 0         | 34           | 36           | <b>297</b>    |
| <b>CW/KK/ST</b>     |              |                      |              |                   |                 |                 |                     |            |                  |           |              |              |               |
| <b>WD/WX*</b>       | 479          | 0                    | 6            | 0                 | 0               | 15              | 0                   | 0          | 4                | 0         | 3            | 598          | <b>1,105</b>  |
| <b>MidWest</b>      | 458          | 81                   | 323          | 11                | 425             | 1,145           | 22                  | 38         | 256              | 1         | 1,350        | 204          | <b>4,314</b>  |
| <b>GY/RN</b>        | 276          | 53                   | 216          | 17                | 40              | 270             | 2                   | 23         | 55               | 0         | 100          | 67           | <b>1,119</b>  |
| <b>Mayo</b>         | 34           | 51                   | 40           | 2                 | 16              | 212             | 2                   | 4          | 46               | 0         | 89           | 60           | <b>556</b>    |
| <b>Donegal</b>      | 135          | 83                   | 398          | 16                | 325             | 336             | 42                  | 273        | 92               | 17        | 274          | 141          | <b>2,132</b>  |
| <b>SLWC</b>         | 176          | 12                   | 124          | 2                 | 89              | 287             | 1                   | 7          | 21               | 9         | 104          | 10           | <b>842</b>    |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>3,842</b> | <b>495</b>           | <b>2,210</b> | <b>100</b>        | <b>1,235</b>    | <b>4,179</b>    | <b>150</b>          | <b>490</b> | <b>859</b>       | <b>28</b> | <b>2,595</b> | <b>1,397</b> | <b>17,580</b> |

\*A breakdown of all external sources (non Tusla) is only available from Waterford; Wexford has included all external sources under "Other"

- 72% (12,708) of children referred to family support services during the first six months of 2017 received a service (Table 37). The percentage who received a service ranged from 95% (n=2,021/2,132) in Donegal to 37% in Dublin South East/Wicklow (n=247/675). In ten of the 15 areas that provided data more than seven out of ten children referred received a service.
- Of the total number of children referred to family support services (Jan – Jun 2017) who received a service 4% (n=467) were subject of a Child in Care Plan; 5% (n=606) were subject of a Tusla Social Work Child Protection Plan; 6% (n=797) were subject of a Tusla Social Work Family Support Plan; 2% (n=264) were subject of a Meitheal Support Plan while one in four (n=3,231) was subject of a Single Agency Family Support Plan.

**Table 37: Number of children referred to Family Support Services (Jan – Jun 2017) who received a service**

|              |                 |   |                       | Of the total number of children referred to FSS (Jan – Jun 2017) and received a service the number who were subject of a: |   |   |                       |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Area         | Number referred | Of number referred, number who received a service | % who rec'd a service | Child in Care Plan  | Tusla Social Work Child Protection Plan | Tusla Social Work led Family Support Plan | Meitheal Support Plan | Single Agency Family Support Plan |
| DSC          | 594             | 483   | 81%                   | 18  | 22                                      | 31  | 9                     | 147                               |
| DSE/WW       | 675             | 247   | 37%                   | 11  | 27                                      | 42  | 22                    | 98                                |
| DSW/K/WW     | 924             | 571   | 62%                   | 8   | 31                                      | 40  | 39                    | 96                                |
| Midlands     | 494             | 296   | 60%                   | 23  | 37                                      | 41  | 8                     | 113                               |
| DNC          | 1,649           | 1,197   | 73%                   | 44  | 27                                      | 65  | 22                    | 23                                |
| Dublin North | 954             | 726   | 76%                   | 16  | 28                                      | 19  | 12                    | 432                               |
| LH/MH        | 1,114           | 463   | 42%                   | 25  | 58                                      | 38  | 19                    | 112                               |
| CN/MN        | 361             | 332   | 92%                   | 23  | 39                                      | 44  | 17                    | 60                                |
| Cork         | 450             | 269   | 60%                   | 19  | 35                                      | 83  | 0                     | 58                                |
| Kerry        | 297             | 243   | 82%                   | 1   | 1                                       | 70  | 2                     | 109                               |
| CW/KK/ST     |                 |   |                       |   |   |   |                       |                                   |
| WD/WX        | 1,105           |   |                       |   |   |   |                       |                                   |
| MidWest      | 4,314           | 3,914   | 91%                   | 144   | 108                                     | 112                                       | 41                    | 838                               |
| GY/RN        | 1,119           | 801   | 72%                   | 16  | 79                                      | 67  | 16                    | 388                               |
| Mayo         | 556             | 403   | 72%                   | 50  | 3                                       | 19  | 21                    | 99                                |
| Donegal      | 2,132           | 2,021   | 95%                   | 40  | 51                                      | 55  | 16                    | 460                               |
| SLWC         | 842             | 742   | 88%                   | 29  | 60                                      | 71  | 20                    | 198                               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>17,580</b>   | <b>12,708</b>                                     | <b>72%</b>            | <b>467 (4%)</b>   | <b>606 (5%)</b>                         | <b>797 (6%)</b>                           | <b>264 (2%)</b>       | <b>3,231 (25%)</b>                |

## 6.2 MEITHEAL

A key component of Tusla's Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS) programme of work is the roll-out of **Meitheal** - a national practice model (common approach to practice) for all agencies working with children, young people and their families. This model is designed to ensure that the needs and strengths of children and their families are effectively identified and understood and responded to in a timely way so that children and families get the help and support needed to improve children's outcomes and realise their rights. It is an early intervention response tailored to the needs of an individual child or young person and is used where more than one agency involvement is needed. There are three stages of the Meitheal process; preparation, discussion and delivery.

### KEY FACTS

- 804 Meitheal processes requested January – June 2017
- 46% (369) requested through Direct Access and 45% (362) requested through Social Work Diversion
- 53% (423) of Meitheal processes requested January – June 2017 proceeded to Stage 2 (Discussion Stage)
- 380 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage 2 between January – June 2017; 72% (272) of these proceeded to Stage 3 (Delivery)
- 473 Meitheal processes were closed January to June 2017; 54% (253) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form; 18% (87) closed following completion of Stage 2; 9% (41) closed following commencement of Stage 3 and 19% (92) closed post-delivery.
- 88 Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN) operating at the end of June 2017, with a further 53 planned.

### 6.2.1 Meitheal Activity Data

*Metrics reported below are new for 2017.*

- 804 Meitheal processes requested in the first six months of 2017. Highest number reported by CW/KK/ST (n=290; 36%) followed by Waterford/Wexford (n=100; 12%) and Galway/Roscommon (n=63; 8%). None reported by Cork. All other areas reported fewer than 50 requests with Donegal and Kerry reporting fewer than 10 (Table 38).
- Over 90% of requests were either through Direct Access or Social Work Diversion, with little or no difference in the actual number of each; 369 (46%) and 362 (45%) respectively. Fewer than one in 10 (9%; n=73) was from Social Work Step-Down.

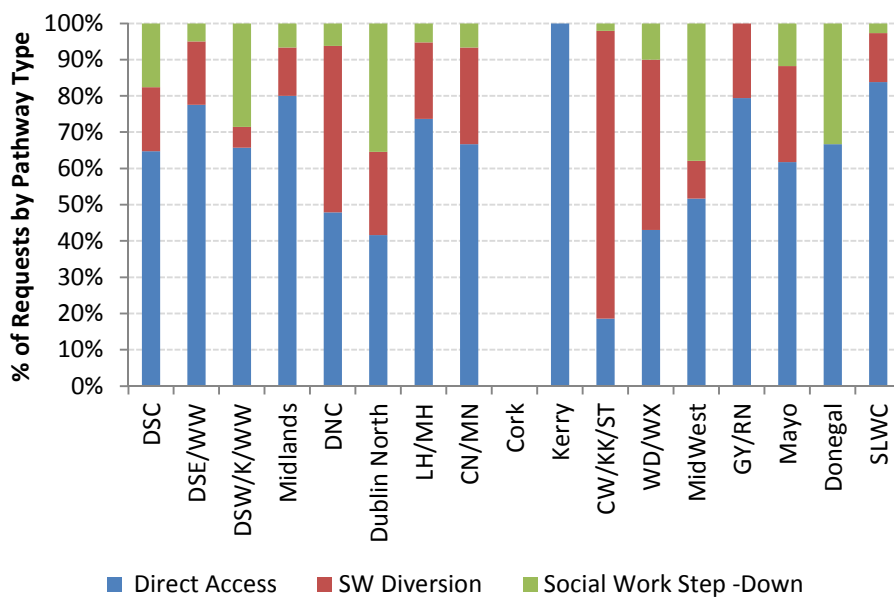
- The percentage of requests from Direct Access ranged from 100% (n=5/5) in Kerry to 19% (n=54/290) for CW/KK/ST, the area with the highest number of requests overall. In twelve areas more than half of the requests were received through Direct Access (Figure 34).
- The percentage of requests from Social Work Diversion ranged from 79% (n=230/290) in CW/KK/ST to 0% in Kerry (n=0/5) and Donegal (n=0/9). Thirteen areas reported a percentage below the national average of 45% (Figure 34).
- The percentage of requests from Social Work Step-Down<sup>23</sup> ranged from 43% (n=10/23) in the MidWest (partial data) to 0% in Kerry (n=0/5) and GY/RN (n=0/63). With the exception of MidWest, Dublin North (35%; 17/48), Donegal (33%; n=3/9) and DSW/K/WW (29%; n=10/35) all areas reported a percentage of 20% or lower (Figure 34).

**Table 38: Meitheal processes requested, January – June 2017**

| Area         | Total Meitheal processes Requested Q1 – Q2 2017 | Of the total number of Meitheal requests for Q1 – Q2 2017 the number (%) where the access pathway was: |                 |                       |                |                       |             |
|--------------|---|--|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|
|              |   | Direct Access  | % Direct Access | Social Work Diversion | % SW Diversion | Social Work Step-Down | % Step-Down |
| DSC          | 17  | 11   | 65%             | 3                     | 18%            | 3                     | 18%         |
| DSE/WW       | 40  | 31   | 78%             | 7                     | 18%            | 2                     | 5%          |
| DSW/K/WW     | 35  | 23   | 66%             | 2                     | 6%             | 10                    | 29%         |
| Midlands     | 15  | 12   | 80%             | 2                     | 13%            | 1                     | 7%          |
| DNC          | 48  | 23   | 48%             | 22                    | 46%            | 3                     | 6%          |
| Dublin North | 48  | 20   | 42%             | 11                    | 23%            | 17                    | 35%         |
| LH/MH        | 19  | 14   | 74%             | 4                     | 21%            | 1                     | 6%          |
| CN/MN        | 15  | 10   | 67%             | 4                     | 27%            | 1                     | 7%          |
| Cork         | 0   |  |                 |                       |                |                       |             |
| Kerry        | 5   | 5  | 100%            | 0                     | 0%             | 0                     | 0%          |
| CW/KK/ST     | 290   | 54   | 19%             | 230                   | 79%            | 6                     | 2%          |
| WD/WX        | 100   | 43   | 43%             | 47                    | 47%            | 10                    | 10%         |
| MidWest      | 29  | 15   | 52%             | 3                     | 13%            | 11                    | 38%         |
| GY/RN        | 63  | 50   | 79%             | 13                    | 21%            | 0                     | 0%          |
| Mayo         | 34  | 21   | 62%             | 9                     | 26%            | 4                     | 12%         |
| Donegal      | 9   | 6  | 67%             | 0                     | 0%             | 3                     | 33%         |
| SLWC         | 37  | 31   | 84%             | 5                     | 14%            | 1                     | 3%          |
| National     | 804   | 369  | 46%             | 362                   | 45%            | 73                    | 9%          |

<sup>23</sup> Social Work Stepdown: where a Meitheal process is initiated when a referral is accepted to the Child and Family Agency Social Work Department, assessed by the Social Work Department and is deemed suitable for closure either after assessment or after a period of intervention but has outstanding unmet need, that requires child and family support services, and is stepped down, with the consent of the parent, via the Child and Family Support Network Coordinator for a Local Area Pathways Response and this results in a Meitheal process being initiated.

Figure 34: Meitheal requests by access pathway



- 53% (n=423) of the Meitheal requests received between January – June 2017 proceeded to Stage Two (Discussion Stage) (Table 39).
- The percentage of requests that proceeded to Stage Two ranged from 16% (n=45/290) in CW/KK/ST to 100% in Dublin South Central (n=17/17), Kerry (n=5/5) and Cavan/Monaghan (n=15/15)
- Ten areas reported a percentage above 70%. With the exception of Kerry and Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan all of the areas were in Dublin Mid Leinster and Dublin North East.

Table 39: Number of Meitheal requests received (Jan-Jun 2017) proceeding to Stage Two (Discussion Stage)

| Area         | Total Meitheal processes requested Q1 – Q2 2017 | Of the total number of requests received the number that Proceeded to Discussion Stage (Stage Two) | % that Proceeded to Discussion Stage (Stage Two) |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| DSC          | 17  | 17   | 100%   |
| DSE/WW       | 40  | 37   | 93%  |
| DSW/K/WW     | 35  | 33   | 94%  |
| Midlands     | 15  | 11   | 73%  |
| DNC          | 48  | 44   | 92%  |
| Dublin North | 48  | 38   | 79%  |
| LH/MH        | 19  | 16   | 84%  |
| CN/MN        | 15  | 15   | 100%   |
| Cork         | 0   |  |  |
| Kerry        | 5   | 5  | 100%   |
| CW/KK/ST     | 290   | 45   | 16%  |
| WD/WX        | 100   | 49   | 49%  |
| MidWest      | 29  | 13   | 45%  |
| GY/RN        | 63  | 40   | 63%  |
| Mayo         | 34  | 23   | 68%  |
| Donegal      | 9   | 6  | 67%  |

|          |     |     |     |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|
| SLWC     | 37  | 31  | 84% |
| National | 804 | 423 | 53% |

- 380 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage Two between January – June 2017. Highest number reported by GY/RN (n=58) followed by DSW/K/WW (n=50). The fewest number was reported by Kerry (n=5) followed by Donegal (n=6) and MidWest (n=8). (Table 40).
- Of these, 72% (n=272) proceeded to delivery (Stage 3) (Meitheal Support Meeting). Eleven areas reported a percentage above 70%. The lowest percentage was reported by WD/WX (30%; 9/30) followed by GY/RN (55%; n=32/58).
- 12% (n=46/380) of processes were closed at the end of Stage 2. The highest percentage was reported by GY/RN (36%; n=21/58). No processes were closed in six areas.
- 10% (n=37/380) of processes were referred for a single agency response. The highest percentage was reported by WD/WX (63%; n=19/30) followed by Dublin North (19%; 7/36). No processes were referred for a single agency response in nine areas.
- 5% (n=18/380) of processes were referred to social work (stepped-up). The highest number was reported by DSW/K/WW (n=5) followed by GY/RN (n=4). The majority of areas reported none.

**Table 40: Meitheal processes reaching completion of Stage Two, Jan - Jun 2017**

| Area         | Number of Meitheal Processes Reaching Completion of Stage Two, Jan-Jun 2017 | Of the total number of Meitheal processes reaching completion of Stage Two (Discussion Stage) the number and percentage that |      |   |     |   |     |               |     |                             |     |
|--------------|---|--|------|---|-----|---|-----|---------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|
|              |   | <i>Proceeded to Delivery (Meitheal Support Meeting)</i>  | %    | <i>Referred to Social Work (Stepped Up)</i> | %   | <i>Referred to a Single Agency Response</i> | %   | <i>Closed</i> | %   | <i>Categorised as Other</i> | %   |
| DSC          | 17  | 16   | 94%  | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 0             | 0%  | 1                           | 6%  |
| DSE/WW       | 31  | 27   | 87%  | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 4             | 13% | 0                           | 0%  |
| DSW/K/WW     | 50  | 38   | 76%  | 5   | 10% | 0   | 0%  | 7             | 14% | 0                           | 0%  |
| Midlands     | 11  | 9  | 82%  | 1   | 9%  | 1   | 9%  | 0             | 0%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| DNC          | 37  | 32   | 86%  | 3   | 8%  | 0   | 0%  | 1             | 3%  | 1                           | 3%  |
| Dublin North | 36  | 23   | 64%  | 0   | 0%  | 7   | 19% | 5             | 14% | 1                           | 3%  |
| LH/MH        | 11  | 8  | 73%  | 0   | 0%  | 3   | 27% | 0             | 0%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| CN/MN        | 12  | 10   | 83%  | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 2             | 17% | 0                           | 0%  |
| Cork         | 0   |  |      |   |     |   |     |               |     |                             |     |
| Kerry        | 5   | 3  | 60%  | 2   | 40% | 0   | 0%  | 0             | 0%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| CW/KK/ST     | 26  | 18   | 69%  | 2   | 8%  | 4   | 15% | 2             | 8%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| WD/WX        | 30  | 9  | 30%  | 1   | 3%  | 19  | 63% | 1             | 3%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| MidWest      | 8   | 8  | 100% | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 0             | 0%  | 0                           | 0%  |
| GY/RN        | 58  | 32   | 55%  | 4   | 7%  | 1   | 2%  | 21            | 36% | 0                           | 0%  |
| Mayo         | 23  | 17   | 74%  | 0   | 0%  | 2   | 9%  | 2             | 9%  | 2                           | 9%  |
| Donegal      | 6   | 5  | 83%  | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 1             | 17% | 0                           | 0%  |
| SLWC         | 19  | 17   | 89%  | 0   | 0%  | 0   | 0%  | 0             | 0%  | 2                           | 11% |
| National     | 380   | 272  | 72%  | 18  | 5%  | 37  | 10% | 46            | 12% | 7                           | 2%  |

- 473 Meitheals closed during the first six months of 2017. 37% (n=174) of those closed were reported by CW/KK/ST. Fourteen areas reported fewer than 25 Meitheal closed (Table 41).
- Almost half (54%; n=253) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form (Stage 1). The percentage closed following submission of a Meitheal request form ranged from 0% in CN/MN (n=0/20); Kerry (n=0/7) and MidWest (n=0/4) to 88% (n=153/174) in CW/KK/ST followed by 69% (n=49/71) in WD/WX.
- Almost one in five (18%; n=87) was closed following completion of the Strengths and Needs Form (Stage 2) and ranged from 0% in DSW/K/WW (n=0/21), Kerry (n=0/7) and MidWest (n=0/4) to 54% (n=22/41) in GY/RN.
- Fewer than one in 10 (9%; n=41) was closed following commencement of Meitheal Support Meetings (Stage 3). The percentage reported ranged from 100% in MidWest (n=4/4) to 0% in four areas (DSE/WW; Midlands; WD/WX and Mayo). Eleven areas reported a percentage below 20%.
- Almost one in five (19%; n=92) was closed post-delivery and ranged from 0% in MidWest (n=0/4) and WD/WX (n=0/71) to 80% (n=16/20) in CN/MN.

**Table 41: Number of Meitheals closed, January - June 2017**

| Area            | Total number of Meitheals closed | Of the total number of Meitheals closed the number and % that were closed following: |            |   |            |  |           |               |            |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|------------|---|------------|--|-----------|---------------|------------|
|                 |                                  | Submission of a Meitheal Request Form  | %          | Completion of the Strengths and Needs Form (Discussion Stage) | %          | Commencement of Meitheal Support meetings (Delivery Stage) | %         | Post delivery | %          |
| DSC             | 4                                | 1  | 25%        | 1   | 25%        | 1  | 25%       | 1             | 25%        |
| DSE/WW          | 9                                | 3  | 33%        | 4   | 44%        | 0  | 0%        | 2             | 22%        |
| DSW/K/WW        | 21                               | 4  | 19%        | 0   | 0%         | 4  | 19%       | 13            | 62%        |
| Midlands        | 21                               | 3  | 14%        | 5   | 24%        | 0  | 0%        | 13            | 62%        |
| DNC             | 14                               | 4  | 29%        | 2   | 14%        | 2  | 14%       | 6             | 43%        |
| Dublin North    | 24                               | 6  | 25%        | 9   | 38%        | 3  | 13%       | 6             | 25%        |
| LH/MH           | 20                               | 7  | 37%        | 1   | 5%         | 1  | 5%        | 11            | 53%        |
| CN/MN           | 20                               | 0  | 0%         | 2   | 10%        | 2  | 10%       | 16            | 80%        |
| Cork            | 0                                |  |            |   |            |  |           |               |            |
| Kerry           | 7                                | 0  | 0%         | 0   | 0%         | 2  | 29%       | 5             | 71%        |
| CW/KK/ST        | 174                              | 153  | 88%        | 12  | 7%         | 1  | 1%        | 8             | 5%         |
| WD/WX           | 71                               | 49   | 69%        | 22  | 31%        | 0  | 0%        | 0             | 0%         |
| MidWest         | 4                                | 0  | 0%         | 0   | 0%         | 4  | 100%      | 0             | 0%         |
| GY/RN           | 41                               | 5  | 12%        | 22  | 54%        | 12   | 29%       | 2             | 5%         |
| Mayo            | 6                                | 1  | 17%        | 3   | 50%        | 0  | 0%        | 2             | 33%        |
| Donegal         | 14                               | 4  | 29%        | 1   | 7%         | 5  | 36%       | 4             | 29%        |
| SLWC            | 23                               | 13   | 57%        | 3   | 13%        | 4  | 17%       | 3             | 13%        |
| <b>National</b> | <b>473</b>                       | <b>253</b>   | <b>53%</b> | <b>87</b>   | <b>18%</b> | <b>41</b>  | <b>9%</b> | <b>92</b>     | <b>19%</b> |

Between January and June 2017, 1,224 people attended Meitheal training as follows:

- 479 Tusla staff
- 75 HSE staff
- 185 Other Agency staff
- 453 NGO staff
- 32 Volunteers and Students

## 6.2.2 Child and Family Support Networks

- 88 Child and Family Support Networks<sup>24</sup> (CFSN) operating at the end of June 2017 with a further 53 CFSNs planned (Table 42).
- Galway/Roscommon reported the highest number of networks operating (n=12) followed by Waterford/Wexford (n=8) and Kerry (n=8). One area (LH/MH) reported none operating but is planning five.

**Table 42: Child and Family Support Networks operating and planned June 2016**

| Area              | CFSNs Operating<br>June 2017 | CFSNs Planned<br>June 2017 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| DSC               | 5                            | 2                          |
| DSE/Wicklow       | 7                            | 2                          |
| DSW/K/WW          | 5                            | 9                          |
| Midlands          | 7                            | 0                          |
| Dublin North City | 5                            | 1                          |
| Dublin North      | 4                            | 0                          |
| Louth/Meath       | 0                            | 5                          |
| Cavan/Monaghan    | 7                            | 7                          |
| Cork              | 6                            | 7                          |
| Kerry             | 8                            | 8                          |
| CW/KK/ST          | 7                            | 0                          |
| WD/WX             | 8                            | 0                          |
| MidWest           | 2                            | 5                          |
| GY/RN             | 12                           | 0                          |
| Mayo              | 2                            | 2                          |
| Donegal           | 2                            | 3                          |
| SLWC              | 1                            | 2                          |
| <b>National</b>   | <b>88</b>                    | <b>53</b>                  |

<sup>24</sup> Child and Family Support Networks: Collaborative networks of community, voluntary and statutory providers intended to improve access to support services for children and their families

# 7.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

## KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- 7.1 Workforce Position
- 7.2 Absence Rate
- 7.3 Social Work Staff
- 7.4 Residential Services
- 7.5 Workforce Learning and Development

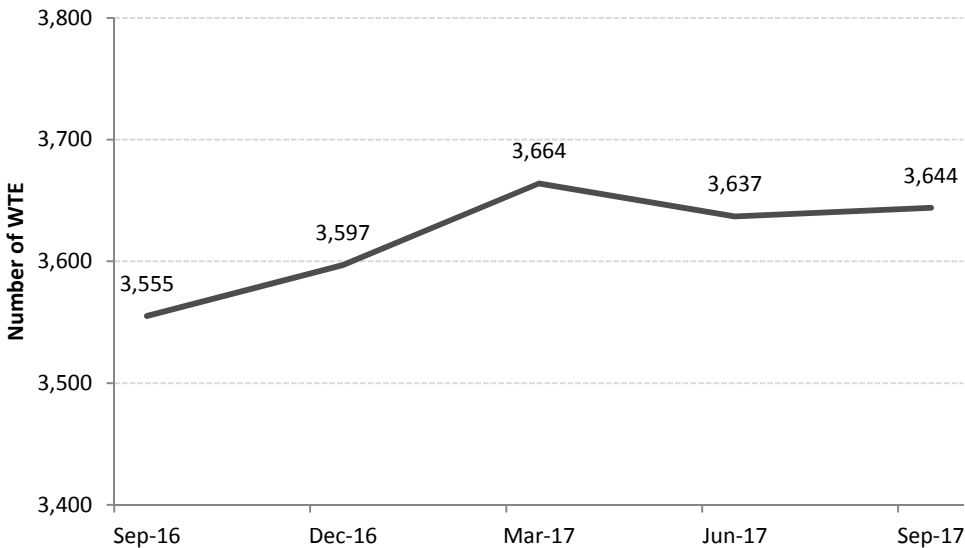
### KEY FACTS

- 3,644 (WTE) employed by the Agency at the end of Q3 2017; 7 more than Q2 2017 and 89 more than Q3 2016
- 294 new staff came on to the Agency’s payroll (Jan - Sept 2017)
- 254 staff left (incl. retirements) the Agency (Jan - Sept 2017)
- 127 staff on maternity leave (incl. 39 unpaid) at the end of Sept 2017
- 451 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of Sept 2017
- 5.21% absence rate (Aug 2017); 0.64 percentage points higher than Q2 2017
- 82 courses run by Workforce Learning and Development in Q3 2017; 930 attendees

### 7.1 Workforce Position

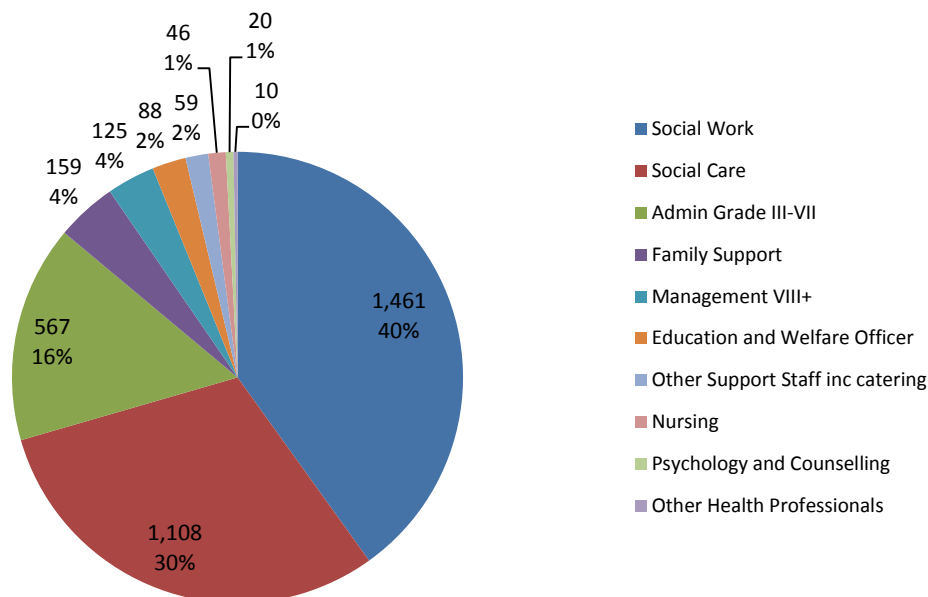
- 3,644 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff (excluding agency staff) employed by Tusla at the end of Q3 2017; seven more than Q2 2017 and 89 more than Q3 2016 (Figure 35).

Figure 35: Total Staff Employed (WTE), by month June 2016– June 2017



- Social workers are the largest category of staff employed by the Agency accounting for 40% (n=1,461) of total staff (WTE) employed at the end of Q3 2017, followed by social care staff accounting for a further 30% (n=1,108). Management (Grade VIII+) account for 4% (124.93) of the workforce (Figure 36).

**Figure 36: Breakdown of staff category (WTE), Q3 2017**



- Management and administration staff experienced an increase in WTEs between Q2 2017 and Q3 2017 of 8 and 11 more WTEs respectively (Table 43). All other categories (with the exception of Psychology and Counselling) experienced either no change or a decrease in WTEs.
- The highest decrease was observed across the Social Care category (n=5.52) followed by Nursing (n=3.42).

**Table 43: Breakdown of staff (WTE) by category and year and quarter**

| Staffing by Category             | Sep-16      | Jun-17      | Sep-17      | Δ+/- Q3 2017 v Q2 2017 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Social Work                      | 1,472.44    | 1,462       | 1,460.53    | -1.47                  |
| Social Care                      | 1,096.89    | 1,114       | 1,108.48    | -5.52                  |
| Admin Grade III-VII              | 490.94      | 556         | 567.27      | 11.27                  |
| Family Support                   | 164.81      | 161         | 159.23      | -1.77                  |
| Management VIII+                 | 106.81      | 117         | 124.93      | 7.93                   |
| Education and Welfare Officer    | 79.22       | 90          | 88.08       | -1.92                  |
| Other Support Staff inc catering | 64          | 60          | 59.41       | -0.59                  |
| Nursing                          | 47.4        | 49          | 45.58       | -3.42                  |
| Psychology and Counselling       | 22.48       | 18          | 19.92       | 1.92                   |
| Other Health Professionals       | 9.92        | 10          | 10.36       | 0.36                   |
| <b>Total Staffing</b>            | <b>3555</b> | <b>3637</b> | <b>3644</b> | <b>6.79</b>            |

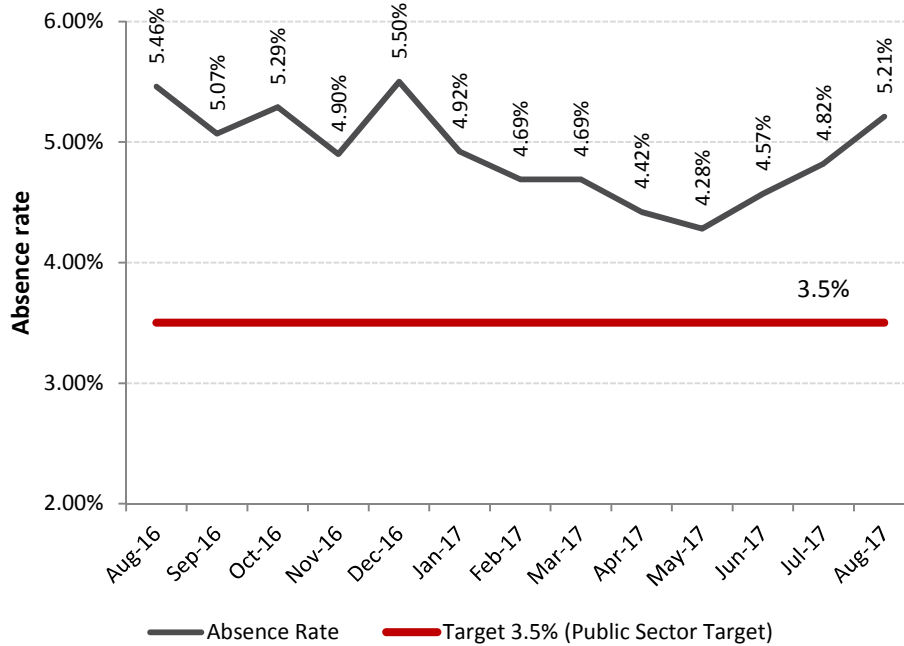
- 294 new staff joined Tusla (came onto Tusla's payroll) between Jan - Sept 2017
- 187 staff left Tusla (i.e., resigned, career breaks, retirement) between Jan – Sept 2017

- 67 staff retired between Jan – Sept 2017
- 127 staff were on maternity leave at the end of Sept 2017 of which 72% (n=91) were on paid maternity leave
- 451 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of Sept2017.

## 7.2 Absence Rate

- At the end of August 2017<sup>25</sup> the overall absence rate for the Agency was 5.21% against a target of 3.5% (target for public sector); third consecutive monthly increase and 0.64 percentage points higher than June 2017 but 0.25 percentage points lower than Aug 2016 (Figure 37).

Figure 37: Overall staff absence rate by month



- The highest absence rate was reported for social care staff (7.81%) (Table 44). The rate for Residential Services was 9.51% (data not shown), 4.3 percentage points higher than the overall rate of 5.21%.

Table 44: Absence rate by staff grade

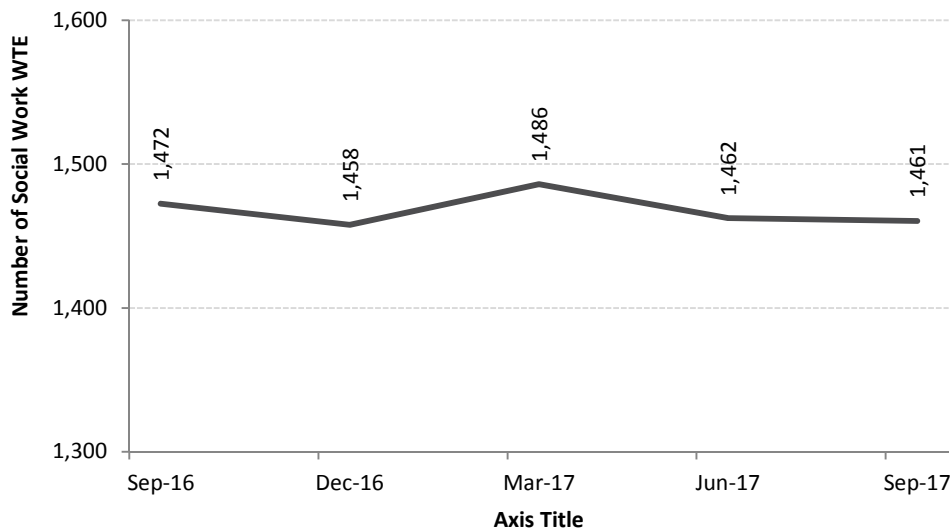
| Staff Grade      | Absence Rate May 2017 |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Social Work      | 4.88%                 |
| Social Care      | 7.81%                 |
| All other grades | 3.39%                 |

<sup>25</sup> Absence rates are reported monthly in arrears

### 7.3 Social Work Staff (WTE)

- 1,461 whole time equivalent (WTE) social work staff (all grades and excluding agency staff) employed by Tusla at the end of Q3 2017; 1.47 fewer than Q2 2017 and 11 fewer than Q3 2016 (Figure 38).

Figure 38: Number of social workers (WTE) by month



- 137 social workers joined Tusla (came onto Tusla's payroll) between Jan and Sept 2017
- 116 social workers left (i.e., resigned, career breaks) Tusla between Jan and Sept 2017
- 17 social workers retired between Jan and Sept 2017
- 76 social workers (incl. 23 unpaid) were on maternity leave at the end of Sept 2017
- 173 agency social workers were employed at the end of Sept 2017
- At the end of August 2017<sup>26</sup> the absence rate for social workers was running at 4.88%, 0.33 percentage points lower than the overall rate (5.21%).
- A breakdown of the number of social workers (all grades) employed at the end of each quarter Q3 2016 – Q3 2017 by area is presented in Table 45.

<sup>26</sup> Absence data is reported a month in arrears

**Table 45: Breakdown of social work staff (WTE) by area Q2 2016 – Q2 2017**

|                             | Social Work (WTE) | Social Work (WTE) | Social Work (WTE) | Social Work (WTE) | Social Work (WTE) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Area                        | Q3 2016           | Q4 2016           | Q1 2017           | Q2 2017           | Q3 2017           |
| DSC                         | 74.61             | 78.84             | 80.6              | 78.23             | 75.02             |
| DSE/WW                      | 103.01            | 97.96             | 107.15            | 101.17            | 101.79            |
| DSW/K/WW                    | 84.39             | 85.26             | 90.28             | 84.75             | 98.12             |
| Midlands                    | 81.4              | 74.86             | 77.97             | 75.62             | 75.44             |
| Regional Services DML       | 17.52             | 18.02             | 19.78             | 22.63             | 22.83             |
| <b>DML Total</b>            | <b>360.93</b>     | <b>350.94</b>     | <b>375.78</b>     | <b>362.4</b>      | <b>373.2</b>      |
| CN/MN                       | 30.61             | 30.22             | 35.42             | 33.45             | 30.4              |
| DNC                         | 100.9             | 99.56             | 98.91             | 96.21             | 88.81             |
| LH/MH                       | 77.85             | 77.48             | 76.99             | 75.08             | 73.54             |
| Dublin North                | 70.51             | 72.06             | 71.33             | 63.83             | 67.22             |
| Regional Services DNE       | 33.87             | 32.83             | 33.78             | 33.4              | 27.68             |
| <b>DNE Total</b>            | <b>313.74</b>     | <b>312.15</b>     | <b>316.13</b>     | <b>301.97</b>     | <b>287.65</b>     |
| CW/KK/ST                    | 62.17             | 66.27             | 66.32             | 66.68             | 66.87             |
| Cork                        | 156.04            | 159.19            | 158.25            | 159.93            | 156.17            |
| Kerry                       | 43.14             | 41.27             | 39.59             | 39.31             | 39.97             |
| WD/WX                       | 86.18             | 83.11             | 85.64             | 85.75             | 86.48             |
| Regional Services South     | 4.9               | 3.87              | 3.98              | 3.98              | 3.98              |
| <b>South Total</b>          | <b>352.43</b>     | <b>353.71</b>     | <b>353.78</b>     | <b>355.65</b>     | <b>353.47</b>     |
| Donegal                     | 59.85             | 61.17             | 60.99             | 62.76             | 64.53             |
| GY/RN                       | 92.22             | 89.9              | 92.08             | 90.4              | 91.77             |
| Mayo                        | 35.76             | 38.52             | 38.52             | 39.23             | 36.71             |
| Mid West                    | 123.84            | 117.73            | 116.23            | 115.44            | 110.46            |
| SLWC                        | 38.65             | 38.98             | 37.57             | 36.02             | 38.43             |
| Regional Services West      | 1                 | 2                 | 4                 | 1                 | 1                 |
| <b>West Total</b>           | <b>351.32</b>     | <b>348.3</b>      | <b>349.39</b>     | <b>344.85</b>     | <b>342.9</b>      |
| Residential DML             | 3.8               | 3.87              | 3                 | 3                 | 2                 |
| Residential DNE             | 4.49              | 4.37              | 2.61              | 2.84              | 2.89              |
| Residential West            |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Residential South           | 4.4               | 4.4               | 4.4               | 4.4               | 4.24              |
| <b>Residential Services</b> | <b>12.69</b>      | <b>12.64</b>      | <b>10.01</b>      | <b>10.24</b>      | <b>9.13</b>       |
| Corporate                   | 78.33             | 76.93             | 76.95             | 84.19             | 89.22             |
| Early Years Service         | 3                 | 3                 | 4                 | 3.17              | 4.96              |
| <b>Corporate</b>            | <b>81.33</b>      | <b>79.93</b>      | <b>80.95</b>      | <b>85.55</b>      | <b>94.18</b>      |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>1,472.44</b>   | <b>1,457.67</b>   | <b>1,486.04</b>   | <b>1,462.47</b>   | <b>1460.53</b>    |

## **7.4 Workforce Learning and Development**

- Workforce Learning and Development (WLD) ran a total of 82 courses during Q3, 2017 at which a total of 930 persons attended. A breakdown of the courses run and attendees by type is presented in the table below.
- During Q3, 2017 the most frequently run course was Child and Youth Participation Training with 11 courses run. This was followed by Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, six monthly refresher, and Meitheal Briefing both with seven courses.
- A total of 608 Tusla staff attended training during Q3, 2017 and of these 45% (n = 271/608) were social workers.
- A total of 296 external staff (non Tusla/HSE) attended training in Q3, 2017; the majority (55%: n = 163/296) of whom received Partnership, Prevention and Family Support training (e.g. Meitheal Standardised Training, Meitheal Train the Trainer courses, Meitheal Standardised Briefings, Participation of Young People Standard Briefings and Parenting Strategy Briefings).
- There were 25 courses that were categorised as 'Other' courses. These courses which constitute 30% of all the courses, refer to a range of locally delivered courses that are developed in response to particular needs and requests in areas such as Neglect, Child Development; addressing HIQA Recommendations etc.

### **Other Developments in Q3 2017**

- The design and development of an e-learning programme to support the Children First Act 2015 was completed in September. This universal programme will support the learning needs and responsibilities of all who work with or have contact with children in the State.
- September was identified as the month when Tusla staff would be encouraged to register on iLearn@Tusla, as a step towards use of this platform for L&D activity management across the agency, and specifically the delivery of online training. Almost 2,000 staff had registered by end of Q3 2017.
- All staffing resources to support the Child Protection and Welfare Strategy were put in place and working on the roll-out of training and support for the national approach to practice with Resolutions Consulting.
- An initiative to deliver ICT (MS Office Suite) training to 320 administrative staff was commenced.
- A pilot programme was agreed and commenced to explore the provision of coach support to learners in their application of learning from training into practice.

| <b>WLD National Training Activity - July to Sept 2017*</b> | <b>No. COURSES RUN</b> | <b>NO. TUSLA SOCIAL WORKERS</b> | <b>NO.TUSLA OTHER STAFF</b> | <b>NO.HSE STAFF</b> | <b>NO.OTHER EXT STAFF</b> | <b>TOTAL NO. ATTENDEES</b> |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Assessment & Analysis                                      | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Attachment Theory into Practice                            | 4                      | 34                              | 26                          | 0                   | 0                         | 60                         |
| Case Load Management                                       | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Children First Training 2011 for Tusla Staff               | 2                      | 0                               | 40                          | 0                   | 0                         | 40                         |
| Core Court Room Skills                                     | 1                      | 13                              | 2                           | 0                   | 0                         | 15                         |
| Corporate Induction  | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Corporate Induction (Regional)                             | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| CPD Strategy Briefings                                     | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Direct Work with Children                                  | 1                      | 4                               | 6                           | 0                   | 0                         | 10                         |
| Diversity in Modern Ireland                                | 1                      | 0                               | 17                          | 0                   | 3                         | 20                         |
| Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence                  | 2                      | 16                              | 21                          | 0                   | 7                         | 44                         |
| Evidence Informed Practitioned Programme                   | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| First Time Managers  | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Grade III & IV Admin Development Programme                 | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Introduction to Court Skills                               | 3                      | 23                              | 24                          | 0                   | 1                         | 48                         |
| Leadership Development Programme                           | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Legal Briefing Seminar                                     | 2                      | 61                              | 17                          | 0                   | 0                         | 78                         |
| Making the Most of Supervision for Supervisees             | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Marte Meo Communication Skills Training -                  | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| NCCIS User Training  | 3                      | 6                               | 11                          | 0                   | 0                         | 17                         |
| Practice Development for New Social Workers                | 2                      | 33                              | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 33                         |
| Procurement Workshop - Tusla Finance                       | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Reflective Recording & Report Writing                      | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Response Ability Pathways                                  | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| SAOR   | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Signs of Safety - Practice Leader                          | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Signs of Safety (2 Day)                                    | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Staff Supervision Skills for Supervisors                   | 1                      | 1                               | 3                           | 2                   | 0                         | 6                          |
| Suicide Prevention - SafeTALK                              | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| TCL (de-escalation) - for Family Care Providers            | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Therapeutic Crisis Intervention - Core                     | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Therapeutic Crisis Intervention - Six Monthly Refresher    | 7                      | 0                               | 37                          | 0                   | 37                        | 74                         |
| Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events                       | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| TUSLA PMLF   | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Understanding Juveniles - exhibit SHB                      | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Other  | 25                     | 30                              | 53                          | 0                   | 85                        | 168                        |
| Child and Youth Participation Training                     | 11                     | 28                              | 55                          | 0                   | 12                        | 95                         |
| Commissioning Standardised Briefing                        | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Meitheal Briefing  | 7                      | 10                              | 4                           | 19                  | 43                        | 76                         |
| Meitheal Facilitators Chairs Meeting                       | 4                      | 1                               | 11                          | 0                   | 37                        | 49                         |
| Meitheal Record Keeper Training                            | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Meitheal Standardised Refresher Course                     | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Meitheal Standardised Train the Trainer                    | 0                      | 0                               | 0                           | 0                   | 0                         | 0                          |
| Meitheal Standardised Training Course                      | 5                      | 3                               | 5                           | 5                   | 71                        | 84                         |

|  |           |            |            |           |            |            |
|--|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Parenting Support Champion Training - Attachment | 0         | 0          | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0          |
| Parenting Support Champion Training - Diversity  | 0         | 0          | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0          |
| PPFS /Meitheal Other                             | 1         | 8          | 5          | 0         | 0          | 13         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                     | <b>82</b> | <b>271</b> | <b>337</b> | <b>26</b> | <b>296</b> | <b>930</b> |

## 8.0 FINANCE

### KEY FACTS

- The financial outturn for the year to date (Sept 2017) is an over-spend of €8.085 million
- Pay costs are over-spent against budget by €1.117 million
- Non pay costs are over-spent against budget by €8.236 million
- Key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €8.183 million over budget
- 41% (€9.791 million) of legal expenditure year to date on guardians ad litem (GALs), including GAL's solicitors and counsel.

### Financial Performance

- The outturn for the year to date (September 2017) is an overspend of €8.085 million.
- The net expenditure for the period is €502.732 million against a budget allocation of €494.646 million.
- Pay costs are over-spent against budget by €1.117 million for the YTD (Table 46).

Table 46: Pay Costs

| Child and Family Agency | Sept 2017 Year To date |         |          | % Variance    |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------|----------|---------------|
|                         | Actual                 | Budget  | Variance | Act vs Budget |
|                         | €'000                  | €'000   | €'000    | €'000         |
| Pay costs               | 190,374                | 184,257 | 1,117    | 1%            |

- Non-pay costs are over-spent against budget by €8.236 million for the YTD (Table 47).

Table 47: Non Pay Costs

| Child and Family Agency | Sept 2017 Year To date |         |          | % Variance    |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------|----------|---------------|
|                         | Actual                 | Budget  | Variance | Act vs Budget |
|                         | €'000                  | €'000   | €'000    | €'000         |
| Non pay costs           | 328,256                | 320,020 | 8,236    | 3%            |

- A key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €8.183 million over-spend YTD (Table 48). This over-spend is due to an increased number of children in private placements. Placement of children in private residential and foster care services is strictly controlled through a national placement process.

**Table 48: Private Residential and Foster Care Costs**

| Child and Family Agency           | Sept 2017 Year To date |        |          | % Variance Act vs Budget |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------------|
|                                   | Actual                 | Budget | Variance |                          |
|                                   | €'000                  | €'000  | €'000    | €'000                    |
| Private Residential & Foster Care | 76,897                 | 68,714 | 8,183    | 12%                      |

- Legal costs incurred by the Agency account for a significant portion of the overall budget of the Agency. The financial position at the end of Sept 2017 shows a year to date spend of €23.695 million against a budget of €21.227 million (i.e., €2.468 million over-spend).
- A breakdown of legal expenditure by type is presented in Table 49.
- 41% (n=€9.791 million) of the legal spend year to date has been on guardians ad litem (GALs) including GALs solicitors and counsel.
- In terms of forecasting these data should be interpreted with caution as they are based on the individual billing pattern of persons concerned.

**Table 49: Legal Expenditure**

| Type                              | June YTD<br>€'000s |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3rd Party Counsel Fees            | 575                |
| 3rd Party Solicitors Fees         | 1,524              |
| Contracted Legal Services         | 9,051              |
| Counsel fees - Tusla              | 1,056              |
| Guardian ad Litem Costs           | 5,452              |
| Guardian ad Litem Counsel fees    | 670                |
| Guardian ad Litem Solicitors fees | 3,669              |
| General Legal Fees                | 774                |
| Court Settlements                 | 97                 |
| Other                             | 827                |
| <b>Net Expenditure</b>            | <b>23,695</b>      |

# APPENDIX I

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used for Tusla Service Areas in charts and tables presented in this report.

| <b>Service Area</b>                        | <b>Abbreviation</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| Dublin South Central                       | DSC                 |
| Dublin South East / Wicklow                | DSE/WW              |
| Dublin South West / Kildare / West Wicklow | DSW/K/WW            |
| Midlands                                   | Midlands            |
| Dublin North City                          | DNC                 |
| Dublin North                               | DN                  |
| Louth / Meath                              | LH/MH               |
| Cavan / Monaghan                           | CN/MN               |
| Cork                                       | Cork                |
| Kerry                                      | Kerry               |
| Carlow Kilkenny / South Tipperary          | CW/KK/ST            |
| Waterford / Wexford                        | WD/WX               |
| Mid West                                   | Mid West            |
| Galway / Roscommon                         | GY/RN               |
| Mayo                                       | Mayo                |
| Donegal                                    | Donegal             |
| Sligo / Leitrim / West Cavan               | SO/LM/WC            |

## APPENDIX I – Hiqa Inspections

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - FOSTERING REPORTS PUBLISHED Q3 2017

#### **Cork- inspection took place in February 2017**

While there were immediate actions taken as required to ensure children were safe, not all child protection and welfare concerns or allegations about foster carers were managed and fully investigated in line with Children First (2011). In addition, child protection and welfare concerns and allegations about foster carers were not consistently responded to in the appropriate manner. There was not always evidence that strategy meetings were held to plan the next steps. Decisions as to whether the concerns or allegations met the threshold of abuse and the procedures to be followed as a result were not always clear on files reviewed. There were no formal systems in place to ensure the Foster Care Committee was notified of child protection and welfare concerns or allegations. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements, such as Garda Síochána (police) vetting and adequate home visits by link workers, were not in place for all foster carers. Assessments of general foster carer applicants were comprehensive, though not always timely, and the reports were of good quality. The process of recommending the approval of foster carers was clear and was in line with national policy, procedures and guidance. There were significant delays in the commencement and completion of relative assessments with many children placed for several years with unassessed relative carers and a lack of evidence of adequate safeguarding measures in place. A small number of children, 0.47% of the total number of children in care, were living with relative carers who had not been approved by the foster care committee. While 40 foster carers, or 8% of the total number, were unallocated the majority of approved foster carers had an allocated link worker. Nevertheless, there was evidence that the level of support and supervision provided to foster carers varied and the frequency of home visits was not always sufficient. There were some supports in the community and specific services funded by the area. Monthly support groups facilitated by social workers were available. While there was no national out-of-hours service for foster carers, the fostering unit did provide out-of-hours telephone support to foster carers during bank holidays, and Christmas and Easter holidays. General foster carers received foundational training before their approval as foster carers and training programmes to assist carers in maintaining the necessary skills and knowledge required to provide high quality care were provided. A new training event, piloted by the fostering unit, which aimed to improve foster carers capacity to provide trauma healing was being rolled out in 2017. However, there was no system in place to either ensure relative carers attended foundation training or that foster carers following approval attended ongoing training. Training records for foster carers were not well maintained and with so many foster carers who had not had a review this meant that the opportunity to address training needs was missed. Comprehensive reviews of foster carers were not carried out in line with regulations and Standards. Although there had been an improvement in the number of reviews completed in the previous 12 months, 43% of carers had not had a review for more than three years and as a result their Garda Síochána (police) vetting was not updated. Reviews following concerns or allegations were of good quality but the quality of standard reviews varied. Garda Síochána (police) vetting, medicals or health and safety updates were pending although the review still went ahead. The foster care committee comprised a range of members who were experienced in childcare and their work was effective. However, it was not fully compliant with the Standards and national policy, procedure and best practice guidance. In addition, there was no training programme for foster care committee members, and no annual report since 2014 as a means of contributing to the development of the service. There was no system in place for the committee to track the progress of investigations of allegations. There was an insufficient number and range of foster carers in place to meet the demand for services and more foster carers were leaving the

service than were being recruited. Furthermore, there were insufficient staff resources in place to progress assessments and increase the pool of potential foster carers. There was no evidence that the foster carer panel was reviewed periodically to ensure there was an appropriate range of foster carers to meet the needs of children in the area. Due to the number of significant issues arising from this inspection, inspectors were concerned that managerial oversight and monitoring was not sufficient. There was no designated authorised person to undertake formal monitoring of the foster care service. The long delays in commencement and completion of relative assessments and subsequent lack of sufficient safeguarding measures was an area of risk in the last HIQA inspection in 2013. While this was on the area risk register, these relative carers had not been allocated a link worker to mitigate the risks. Systematic audits were not carried out and there was little evidence of case management and improvements were required regarding record keeping. Interim management arrangements while the principal social worker for fostering was on leave were not clear. 35 of 80 cases reviewed by inspectors were escalated to the alternative care services manager, and he was asked to address the risks and concerns arising. These concerns were as follows: the adequacy of investigations following a child protection or welfare concern or allegation about foster carers and unclear outcomes to strategy meetings, and the lack of a system to ensure that a child would not be placed with foster carers for whom there was an open concern or allegation; unassessed and unapproved relative carers without Garda Síochána (police) vetting; significant delays in the commencement and completion of relative assessments with many children placed for several years; a lack of evidence of adequate safeguarding measures in place for these relatives and for foster carers without link workers; adults living in foster carer households without Garda Síochána (police) vetting; relative carers who had not been approved by the foster care committee; inadequate support and supervision of foster carers; foster carers where the number of unrelated children in placement exceeded the standards; record keeping, information governance, and due diligence when foster carers transfer from one area to another. A response was received from the alternative care services manager in relation to all of the cases escalated, and this response included the assignment of a link social worker to all unassessed and unapproved relative carers, and assurances that a process had commenced to ensure Garda Síochána vetting was completed and updated for all foster carers. Due to the level of non compliance with standards, five of which were of major non compliance, the Chief Operating Officer of Tusla was written to regarding these concerns. A meeting was held with the Service Director following the inspection. At that meeting, the service director confirmed what immediate action had been taken and the further actions that were in progress. The actions outlined by the Service Director consisted of new posts being created, including senior practitioners and a team leader, and a review of the management structures which he indicated would be completed by the end of quarter two.

## **Dublin North - inspection took place in April 2017**

The area took appropriate action to protect children in the care of foster carers where child protection concerns or allegations had been made against foster carers. Inspectors found good quality safeguarding arrangements while investigations were ongoing. The area did not consistently classify initial reports that alleged harm to a child in the care of a foster carer in line with the local area policy to ensure those that required a child protection response were managed in line with Children First (2011). 14% of all foster carers had not had their An Garda Síochána (police) vetting updated in more than three years and inspectors were not assured that all foster carers were trained in line with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) and in safe care practices. In response, the area had a plan to ensure all foster carers received this training before the end of 2017. The area appropriately screened relative foster carers before emergency placements were made. Assessments of both relative and general carers were of good quality. There had been significant drift in six relative foster care assessments that had been completed but had not yet been recommended for approval by the committee and there was no system in

place to track the progress of these assessments and escalate them so that timely action could be taken. Inspectors escalated the lack of timely action in relation to the approval of these relative foster care assessments to the fostering management team and a satisfactory response was subsequently received from the area. With the exception of one foster care file reviewed by inspectors, foster carers had formal Garda vetting completed and recorded on their files. Inspectors escalated one foster care household where Garda vetting had not been completed for three adult members of the house. The area subsequently provided assurances that Garda vetting would be applied for these adults. The process in place for foster carers who transferred into the service was not followed through comprehensively and was not in line with the transfer protocol in foster care committee policy and procedures. This meant that the committee did not have appropriate oversight of the transfers and the area could not adequately review their full history of fostering and assure themselves that carers could safely and appropriately care for children in their care. The majority of foster carers had an allocated link worker and were, in general, well supported. Foster carers that met with inspectors indicated that they were satisfied with the service that was provided. The arrangements for the supervision of foster carers who were allocated were good. Foster carers were visited regularly and received regular phone calls. However, there was no dedicated out-of-hours service to support foster carers outside of office hours. Where foster carers were unallocated the area was unable to verify when the last visit had been to these carers by the fostering department. Therefore the oversight of and safeguarding arrangements in place for unallocated foster carers in the area was insufficient. Three foster carers had not been visited by a link worker in a significant amount of time. These cases were escalated to the principal social worker for urgent action. The area manager had begun to implement a system to provide oversight of this and had commenced an audit of all foster carers and corresponding children in care to provide assurance on visits that were required. Foster carers received foundational training before their approval as foster carers. The area did not always ensure relative foster carers attended the introduction to fostering training. The area held regular training and ensured foster carers were informed of training dates. There was no overall training strategy for foster carers. A comprehensive training needs analysis had not been carried out and there was no comprehensive structured programme of training in place that responded to the training needs of foster carers. Where reviews were completed, they were of good quality. These reviews were comprehensive and included the voice of the child placed with carers. Reviews of foster carers were not up to date for 155 foster carers, who had not had a review for more than three years. Inspectors escalated the significant delay in completing foster care reviews. The area manager provided written assurances to HIQA that all reviews would be up-to-date by June 2018 which allowed for the backlog to be addressed along with on-going reviews. The area was not routinely completing reviews where a report of a serious complaint or allegation had been made against foster carers. As part of the plan to address the deficits in reviews, these foster carers were to be prioritised by the area. The Foster Care Committee was in compliance with the national policy, procedure and best practice guidance on foster care committees. The work of the committee was effective and they made clear decisions. The committee operated an induction program for new members. Committee members had Garda vetting and attended training. The committee maintained a log of serious concerns and allegations, however, they did not track the progress of investigations or follow up to ensure they were completed. The area did not have sufficient resources in place to assess carers. However, they funded a private foster care agency to complete assessments when required. The area was resourced to recruit foster carers. The recruitment of foster carers was becoming more challenging and the area did not have sufficient placements to meet the needs of the service. In response, the area had plans to pilot a number of new and creative initiatives in the area to address the shortfall in recruitment of foster carers. However, there was no overall recruitment strategy in place in the area.

## Sligo/Leitrim - inspection took place in April 2017

Immediate actions were taken as required to ensure children who made allegations were safe. Child protection and welfare concerns and allegations about foster carers reviewed by inspectors were all managed and investigated. However, it was not always clear if this was carried out in line with Children First: National Guidance on the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) due to the poor quality of some records. Initial assessments were carried out in relation to all allegations which were reviewed by inspectors. However, decisions about whether concerns or allegations met the threshold of abuse and the procedures to be followed as a result were not always clearly recorded on files. Due to gaps in foster carer files, critical information and the rationale for decision-making in relation to allegations was at times difficult to establish. Two of the four cases reviewed required escalation to the area manager as link workers and the team leader were not able to provide assurances in relation to allegations that, for example, there had been a comprehensive investigation, clear outcomes or adequate follow up. Subsequent to this, inspectors sought assurances that all child protection concerns in relation to children in foster care over the last 24 months, including allegations against foster carers, were all managed in line with Children First (2011), and that necessary safeguarding arrangements were put in place. The area manager provided an appropriate action plan in relation to this. There were some appropriate safeguarding measures in place. At the time of this inspection, all children in care had allocated social workers and all approved foster carers had allocated link workers. However, over the previous 12 months there had been a high level of staff turnover and periods of staff shortages. The frequency and quality of home visits to foster carers varied as a result. While relatives were waiting on their assessment to be carried out, records did not show that these carers were provided with supervision and support from the fostering service, despite children being in placement with them. Data provided by the service area showed that while all foster carers had Garda Síochána (police) vetting, this needed to be updated for 34% of foster carers. Inspectors found on inspection that two foster carers did not have evidence of appropriate Garda vetting on file. The area manager provided assurances that Garda vetting for these carers would be immediately obtained. While training in line with Children First: National Guidance on the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) was provided by the service area on a yearly basis, records did not show that all foster carers had attended. Complaints made against foster carers and by foster carers were not appropriately categorised, recorded or notified to the Foster Care Committee. Because of this, there was no system for management to track and have oversight of all complaints about the service or to conduct a collective analysis in relation to complaints for learning purposes. There had been a high turnover of staff on the fostering team over the previous 12 months and there were periods where the fostering team was understaffed. The level of support and supervision provided to foster carers and the frequency of home visits over the course of the year had varied and was not always in line with local policy. There was a foster care support group operating in the area but this was facilitated and run by foster carers themselves, with limited involvement from the social work department. The support group coordinators were provided with the opportunity to meet with the principal social worker and team leader on annual basis to discuss issues that arose over the course of the year. Foster carers received appropriate foundational training before their approval as foster carers. However, the provision, attendance and recording of ongoing training for approved foster carers varied. While relevant training sessions were organised and offered to approved foster carers, there was no system in place to ensure that foster carers attended ongoing training to ensure that they equipped themselves to meet the needs of the children in their care. Reviews of foster carers were not carried out in line with regulations and standards. Over 50% (45) of foster carers had not had a review for more than three years. As a result of this, a high number of foster carers had not had their Garda Síochána (police) vetting updated. There was a foster care review schedule in place for 2017 in order to attempt to increase the number of foster carer reviews being carried out. Inspectors sought and received an assurance from the area manager that the area's action plan on foster carer reviews had commenced and that quarterly

progress reports would be submitted to HIQA in relation to the achievement of the targets set out in the plan. Due to such a small number of foster carer reviews taking place, the opportunity provided for the updating of Garda vetting, consideration of foster carers' performance and current circumstances and assessment of their training and support needs was missed. Some performance issues were addressed through mechanisms such as disruption meetings and Garda Vetting and training were addressed by the long-term assessment matching process. However, the gaps identified in relation to the updating of Garda vetting and training needs were not effectively addressed by the current systems in place. Due to the small number of foster carer reviews that took place, there was little learning from reviews that would assist in the identification of gaps in the foster care service as a whole. The Foster Care Committee was guided by Standards and national policy, procedure and best practice guidance. The chairperson had relevant expertise and was clear about her responsibilities as chair and those of the committee members. Committee members had an appropriate mix of experience and expertise. Members were well prepared for meetings and issues were thoroughly discussed. There were some specific deficits identified. While allegations were notified to the committee, there was no system for the committee to track the progress of investigations of allegations. There was little evidence that the committee made recommendations in relation to specific further training for approved foster carers. There were foster carer reviews carried out which did not include any reference to updated Garda vetting, medicals or health and safety checks. The committee subsequently recommended approval following reviews without ensuring that these updates were completed. However, overall the committee was effective in the business it conducted and made clear decisions. While staff had mixed views in relation to the sufficiency of the number of foster carers on the panel, there was a consensus that the range of foster carers in place to meet the demand of the service was inadequate. While there were a number of foster carers on the panel listed as being available to accept a placement, these were limited in terms of their availability and the type of care they could provide. While formal reviews of the foster care panel did not take place periodically, it had been identified at a foster care recruitment planning meeting that more carers were needed from different ethnic and minority backgrounds as well as those who could care for sibling groups and children in the 15-17 year age bracket. A foster care recruitment action plan was drawn up in 2016 and this included a plan for poster and leaflet circulation in the local community, recruitment stands at supermarkets and local events and advertisements in newspapers. Despite these efforts, only three general foster care assessments had been carried out and approved in the previous 12 months. Data provided by the area showed that four general foster carers were undergoing the assessment process and three general foster care applicants were on the waiting list for assessment. There had been insufficient staff resources in place to carry out ongoing recruitment strategies and conduct assessments in order to increase the pool of potential foster carers. During the course of the inspection, there were concerns about the recording systems and different individual practices of link workers in relation to recording, IT and filing systems. Due to inconsistencies in these practices, it was often difficult to access and establish critical information on files. While some audits of files took place to ensure necessary documents were in place, inspectors found that the quality of record keeping and case notes was inconsistent and at times, poor. Thorough and systematic audits were not carried out and there was little evidence of case management and oversight. Due to this, inspectors were concerned that managerial oversight and monitoring was not sufficient. The issue of inconsistencies in record-keeping and IT systems was escalated for review and an action plan was provided by the area manager to address these concerns.

### **Galway/Roscommon - inspection took place in May 2017**

This inspection identified that the two counties that make up this service area were integrated in relation to how they arranged training and recruitment. In all other areas of practice they functioned independently from each other. Complaints and allegations were appropriately responded to and actions were taken to keep

children safe. There was a system in place to ensure that complaints, concerns and allegations were recorded, managed and tracked until a final outcome was reached. This system ensured management oversight of complaints, concerns and allegations. However, there were some differences in practice throughout the area and the systems in place required further embedding into practice to ensure that complaints, concerns and allegations were consistently managed in both areas, and that all allegations were notified to the Foster Care Committee. During the inspection, one allegation was brought to the attention of the principal social worker for further action to be taken as the issues involved had not been sufficiently addressed. In addition, one complaint was referred to the fostering team leader as further action was required to ensure the foster carers had oversight of the situation. Systems in place for obtaining and updating An Garda Síochána (police) vetting were not reliable. Two foster carers had been approved despite there being no vetting evident on their files and, in addition, not all adults living in foster homes had evidence on file of being Garda vetted. These potential risks were escalated to the area manager following the inspection and the area manager informed HIQA that a comprehensive audit had been conducted of all fostering files. Systems to ensure that updated Garda vetting for all foster carers would be sought in time were being put in place. One file was also referred to the principal social worker for An Garda Síochána (police) vetting for an adult family member that was not on the file. The implementation of the improved Garda vetting system put in place following the inspection should address this deficit. Assessments of prospective foster carers were comprehensive and of good quality and followed the national framework. However, there were some delays in completing assessments. There were very small waiting lists for assessments and there were plans in place to allocate these cases. The majority of foster care households where children were placed had an allocated link worker. Six foster carers did not have an allocated link worker at the time of the inspection but these were due to be allocated later in the month. Some formal supervision of foster carers took place. The recording of the formal supervision process by link workers with foster carers was not consistent and managers were aware of this and were working towards achieving consistency. Foster carers were well supported. Foster carers described good formal and informal support by their link workers. There were support groups available which were provided by a national voluntary organisation and there were some informal support groups for foster carers provided by link workers. There was a variety of good additional support services available to foster carers as a support to placements where children had complex needs. These supports included the work of the social care workers and leaders, the services of an occupational therapist and access to respite care. Management oversight of link workers was mixed. There was one team leader vacancy in the area and this had an impact on the ability of the existing team leaders to manage all of the link workers in the area. The quality of recording in files was of mixed quality; some files were comprehensive and detailed while others were poor. Files were not well organised and basic information was not easily accessed. Some case notes were brief and lacking in detail. The provision of training was good and was well organised. Foster carers received foundation training in foster care during the assessment process and prior to being approved. The area had an initiative in place whereby some training events were mandatory for all new foster carers including Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) and farm safety training. Some foster carers undertook relevant training following their approval. Foster carers were informed of training events being provided by the area on a range of subjects. The area maintained training records on the training that was undertaken by foster carers but this was not always clearly recorded in their files. Therefore, it was difficult for managers and staff to know whether or not all foster carers participated in regular training and to ensure that they equipped themselves to meet the needs of the children in their care. Reviews of foster carers were not carried out in line with the regularity required by the standards but the area was working towards compliance and was making progress. Seventy-one or 25 % of foster carers had not had a review in more than three years. Prior to the inspection the principal social workers had scheduled the majority of outstanding reviews and planned to have them all up-to-date by August 2017. Reviews were of good quality and were useful and positive experiences for the foster carers. There was evidence of good

practice in the review process such as discussions about significant incidents and identification of learning from these incidents. However, there was room for improvement in the process as allegations were not always followed by a review of the foster carers. In addition, key information such as considering the views of foster carers own children, updated Garda vetting and written updated health and safety checks of the foster carers home were not included. The two Foster Care Committees were guided by but not fully compliant with the standards and the national policy, procedure and best practice guidance for foster care committees. The committees comprised a range of appropriate members who were Garda vetted. The committees fulfilled many of their responsibilities under the standards. The committees were effective and they made clear decisions. The committees had access to specialist advice which guided their work in relation to medical issues relating to applicants for fostering. However, they did not approve long-term placements or contribute to the planning of foster care services and they did not verify the supporting documentation provided for fostering assessments. In one county the foster care committee did not have oversight of all allegations made against foster carers. Recruitment and retention strategies were good and the area maintained a panel of foster carers, with new foster carers coming on stream continually to replace those that left. Despite this there were insufficient foster carers to meet the needs of the service. There was a matching panel that met regularly to discuss requests for placements and the availability of foster carers and to identify a match between a particular child's needs and the foster carers capacity to meet those needs. However, the panel of foster carers was not formally reviewed as required by the standards.

### **Kerry - inspection took place in May 2017**

Complaints and allegations were responded to appropriately and action was taken to safeguard children when allegations were made. Children's safety was prioritized in the area. Allegations were investigated appropriately, children were interviewed on their own and there was good managerial oversight of investigations. However, allegations were not notified to the foster care committee in a timely way. Not all foster carers were trained in line with Children First: National Guidance on the Protection and Welfare of Children (Children First) (2011). There was no system to ensure that Garda vetting was renewed for foster carers every three years, and was sought for all young people in foster care households when they became adults, which posed a risk for the service. Inspectors sought an assurance in relation to this and a satisfactory response was received. Assessments of prospective foster carers were comprehensive and the reports were of good quality. However, there were long delays in completing the assessments of relative foster carers and a substantial number of relative foster carers had not yet been assessed. There were gaps in the oversight of relative placements as the preliminary reports were not signed off by both principal social workers and the foster care committee was not notified of these placements. Preliminary checks on relative foster carers were not always carried out in full and Garda vetting was not in place for one relative foster carer. Inspectors sought assurances from the area manager in relation to these issues and a satisfactory response was received. There was good practice in relation to the support provided to foster carers as all foster care households where children were placed had allocated link social workers. Link social workers visited foster carers regularly and provided supervision of foster carers although this was not recorded on supervision templates. Additional supports were provided at monthly training events. There was no dedicated out-of-hours service. There was also good practice in relation to the provision of training. All foster carers received foundational training before their approval as foster carers and a programme of regular training events was in place. Foster carers were kept informed about training events. Training records were well-maintained. Approximately 40% of foster carers had not had a review in over three years. The review reports were of mixed quality and the voices of the children were not well reflected. The recommendations from reviews did not always contain timelines for completion and there was no formal system in place for following up on the recommendations arising from reviews in a timely manner. The foster care committee comprised a range of experienced

members who made clear decisions and carried out its work effectively. However, it was not fully compliant with the Standards and national policy, procedure and best practice guidance. Garda vetting was not in place for all committee members and the committee did not produce an annual report. There was no system in place for the committee to track the progress of investigations of allegations. The area demonstrated a commitment to the recruitment and retention of foster carers and there were sufficient numbers of foster carers. Managers and staff identified that they did not have a sufficient range of foster carers to meet the demands of the service. Foster carers tended to leave the service because the children aged out of care or because of changes to their own family circumstances.

## **MidWest - inspection took place in March 2017**

Allegations were not managed in line with Children First (2011). While allegations were investigated, there were gaps in how the social work team managed them in that not all allegations were comprehensively assessed and some were not assessed in a timely manner. There was a system for formally notifying the foster care committee of an allegation of abuse, but not all allegations were reported to the committee and those which were notified, were not notified in a timely way. While there was a system in order for the foster care committee to track the progress of an investigation, this system was not in operation at the time of the inspection. Therefore there was a lack of oversight of how these allegations were managed to ensure they were not unduly delayed. There was a system in place but this was not in operation to ensure that all foster care household members had been An Garda Síochána (police) vetted, which posed as a risk to children placed in foster care. Inspectors escalated this matter to the Area Manager. In response, the Area Manager confirmed that there were 30 foster carers who did not have evidence of Garda vetting on files and 116 members of the household aged 16 and over who did not have Garda vetting. The Area Manager provided assurances that Garda Vetting was being processed as a matter of priority. Foster carers were trained in Children First: National Guidance on the Protection and Welfare of Children (Children First) (2011). Assessments of prospective foster carers were comprehensive and reports were of good quality. However, due to shortages in staffing, assessments were not carried out within required timelines in line with regulations and Standards. In addition, there were long delays in the completion of assessments of relative foster carers. There were a number of relative foster carers awaiting an assessment. Due to the backlog of relative foster carers awaiting assessments, the area had sourced private agencies to complete these assessments. There were 17 relative foster carers waiting assessment and 11 relative foster carers undergoing assessments at the time of the inspection. Relative carers who had not yet been assessed were allocated a link worker in the interim, which was an example of good practice in the area. Supervision and support was not provided to foster carers in line with Standards. 30 general foster carers and six relative foster carers did not have an allocated social worker. There were seven foster care households without a link worker who also had children placed without an allocated social worker, which posed a significant risk. The frequency of home visits to these foster carers was insufficient. Inspectors requested and received written assurances that these foster carers who were dual unallocated have now received appropriate safeguarding visits. Where foster carers were allocated a social worker, there was not a sufficient level of home visits to ensure supervision and support to foster carers. Records of discussions between foster carers and social workers following home visits were of mixed quality. There were limited support groups available to foster carers in the previous 12 months to the inspection. There was no out-of-hours service available to meet the needs of foster carers. Foster carers received foundational training before their approval as foster carers and some foster carers undertook relevant training following their approval. There were a number of training events held throughout the 12 months prior to the inspection. However, these training events had limited spaces and not all foster carers attended this training. Relative carers did not always attend training following their approval. The area maintained a central register of training attended by foster carers. However, there was limited evidence of

training attended maintained on foster carers' files. The majority of reviews were not carried out in line with standards. Furthermore, there were 32% of foster carers who had not had a review in over three years. In some cases, foster carers had not been reviewed in a considerable number of years. As a result, foster carers' continuing capacity to care for children placed in their care was not being assessed. For example, Garda vetting had not been updated, training needs and health and safety assessments had not been updated. Inspectors sought and received assurances from the Area Manager regarding a plan to address the backlog of outstanding reviews. Reviews which had been completed had not been carried out in line with Standards and regulations. Inspectors found that the quality of reviews was poor and were not comprehensive. For example, An Garda Síochána (police) vetting, health and safety checks and medicals were not included and updated for all reviews. In addition, the majority of reviews did not contain evidence that the views of the child were sought and feedback from key professionals, such as child in care social workers, was brief. The foster care committee was guided by but was not fully compliant with the Standards and National Policy, Procedure and Best Practice Guidance. There was a range of members on the committee who were experienced and knowledgeable in child care. There were three committees in the area, which were all chaired by one chairperson to ensure standardised procedures and practices were implemented. There was evidence of the committee making efficient and clear decisions. However, there was no formal training programme in place for members of the committee. There was no annual review in the year prior to the inspection due to staffing shortages and there were no quarterly reports submitted to the service in order to ensure learning and effective oversight of the service. Furthermore, there was no system in place in order to track the progress of investigation of allegations in order to ensure these outcomes were not unduly delayed. Some members of the foster care committee had no updated An Garda Síochána (police) vetting and there was no effective system in place to ensure that updated Garda vetting was sought when required. There was a lack of effective recruitment and retention strategies. As a result, there were insufficient foster carers in the area to meet the needs of the service and more foster carers were leaving the service than were being recruited. The foster care panel was reviewed periodically.

### **Mayo- inspection took place in June 2017**

Allegations and complaints were responded to appropriately and action was taken to safeguard children when allegations were made. Children's safety was prioritised in the area and there was a system in place where allegations, complaints and serious concerns were recorded, managed and tracked until a final outcome was reached. The foster care committee was informed of all allegations and complaints and there was good management oversight. However, not all allegations were correctly classified and there was no clear decision making process in place to decide whether an allegation reached the threshold for a statutory response. Systems in place for obtaining An Garda Síochána (police) vetting were robust. However, inspectors found that 11 foster carers did not have updated Garda vetting as required. The principal social worker told inspectors that five forms were with the Garda vetting office and that the other six were with the foster carers for completion at the time of inspection. Foster carers received training in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) prior to their approval. While there was Children First (2011) training provided in 2016, there was no training provided in 2014 and 2015. This was due to the absence of a trainer of this module in the area. However, there was no oversight of foster carers attendance at Children's First (2011) training, therefore the area was unable to confirm whether all foster carers had been trained in Children First. Assessments of prospective foster carers were comprehensive, detailed and of good quality. The assessments were a comprehensive analysis of the carers' ability to be a foster carer and included verification of information provided. There were some delays in the completion of a small number of assessments. There was evidence of formal supervision of foster carers as set out in the national policy on the role of the link worker. Most foster carers received good support from their link

worker. Some files contained good and detailed case notes and inspectors found that all foster care files were excellently maintained and structured, therefore information was easily accessible and well kept. Foster carers with children with complex needs received extra support and the area had a psychologist and an alternative care project leader who provided additional support to foster carers and the children in their care. Not all foster carers had an allocated link social worker. Due to a member of staff leaving the team, 21 carers did not have a link social worker, and these cases had been divided between the remainder of the team in a caretaking capacity. However, there was no system in place to ensure that safeguarding visits took place for these carers, and 10 of these foster carers had not received a visit by a link social worker in over six months. In addition, not all allocated foster carers had received safeguarding visits from their link social workers in the previous six months. A further eight allocated carers had not received a link social work visit in the last six months, in line with national policy. This was brought to the attention of the principal social worker during the inspection. Prior to the completion of the inspection the principal social worker provided inspectors with a plan to ensure that all foster care visits would be completed within one month of the inspection. Training of foster carers was a priority in the area and inspectors reviewed a comprehensive three-year training needs analysis that the area developed in conjunction with the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) workforce development regional training team. An ongoing programme of training was provided to foster carers and foster carers were consulted in what training they may require. However, there was no evidence of management oversight of the overall training attendance by foster carers in the area. Data provided by the area showed that out of 97 foster carers in the area 33 had been reviewed in the 12 months prior to the inspection. The reviews were comprehensive, detailed and of excellent quality. Four additional reviews were carried out following the investigations of serious complaints and allegations. These were also of excellent quality and the outcome was notified and tracked by the foster care committee. The foster care committee comprised a wide range of experienced members who made clear decisions and carried out their work effectively. However, it was not fully compliant with the standards and national policy, procedures and best practice. The foster care panel did not have all the information required by national policy. Some foster care committee members did not have updated Garda vetting. The chair of the foster care committee told inspectors that the forms were with the Garda vetting office at the time of the inspection. The area had a formal recruitment strategy in place and a demonstrated commitment to the retention of foster carers. However, the area did not have a formal retention strategy. While there was a sufficient number of foster carers, managers and staff identified that they did not have a sufficient range of foster carers to meet the needs of children coming into care. Exit interviews were conducted and foster carers tended to leave because the children aged out of care or returned to their families.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - RESIDENTIAL SERVICES REPORTS PUBLISHED Q3 2017**

### **OSV-0004161 (DML) - inspection took place in April 2017**

Young people were well-cared for by staff. All young people had up-to-date care plans and placement plans. Care plans addressed the identified needs of young people and placement plans set out how these needs would be met by staff on a day to day basis. However, a small number of actions from care plans were not reflected in placement plans. Leaving care and after care planning required improvement. There were delays in appointing all young people an aftercare worker and this meant that leaving care plans were not fully developed at the time of the inspection. Some of the young people expressed concerns about leaving care and said that they did not know what supports would be in place for them when the time came. Young people were supported to have regular contact with family and friends, in line with their wishes and care plans.

Child protection concerns were well managed in the centre. Staff were trained in Children First (2011) and although not all had refresher training at the time of the inspection, this was scheduled. Staff were emotionally supportive of young people and were proactive in their management of behaviour that challenged. Practices related to the management of absences from the centre were not fully in line with national policy. There were improved governance and management systems in the centre since the last inspection. However, further improvements were required in relation to ensuring the centre operated within its stated purpose and function, and managing risk. The staff team was qualified and experienced. The centre had assessed the training needs of the staff team, and although there was a training programme in place, the staff team was not trained in national policy related to managing risk or the administration of medication. Young people told inspectors that they got on well with staff and most young people liked living in the centre. Those that met with inspectors said that they felt listened to, could talk to staff if they had any concerns and that they were aware of their rights. However, some young people told inspectors that they were unhappy with their clothing allowance.

### **OSV-0004176 (DNE) - inspection took place in May 2017**

This centre was last inspected in August 2016 (monitoring event 17964) when a follow-up inspection took place subsequent to a full inspection in January 2016 (monitoring event 16942). At the time of the last inspection improvements were required in relation to complaints management, medication management and risk management systems. While this inspection found that improvements had been made in relation to medication management and risk management practices improvements were still required in relation to the availability of a national medication management policy and the management of complaints. Children told inspectors they were happy that the house had been redecorated. While not all of the children were happy to be living in the centre they identified staff members that they would speak to if they had a concern. Children also told inspectors that they did not always feel listened to. The house had recently undergone some significant refurbishment and painting and presented as clean and homely. Overall the staff team provided good quality care to the three children living in the centre. In general, children were safe and their rights were respected and promoted. The children had opportunities to engage in interests similar to their peers. All of the children had an allocated social worker and an up-to-date care plan in place. Two of the young people were being supported to complete their leaving certificate with additional supports including grinds but one of the children was not attending an educational placement. While one of the young people had an aftercare plan in place the other young person did not. The service was managed by an experienced centre manager who was well supported by an experienced team of social care leaders and social care workers. Some management systems required improvement including the development of a national suite of policies and procedures to guide staff, monitoring and oversight arrangements and responses to escalated risks. There was good quality supervision taking place. However, not all of the staff had received the required mandatory training including refresher children first training, medication management and behavior management.

### **OSV-0004178 (DNE) - inspection took place in June 2017**

Children presented as comfortable in their surroundings and at ease with the staff team. Children told inspectors that living in the centre was fine. They interacted with members of staff as they want about their daily activities throughout the course of the inspection. Children were supported and encouraged in all aspects of their lives by the staff team. There was a relaxed and calm atmosphere in the centre which reflected the caring and nurturing approach of the staff team. Children's rights were respected and promoted and complaints were well managed. Children attended school or training programmes and this was encouraged and facilitated by the staff team. The staff team were respectful in their interactions with the children and encouraged them in all their endeavours. However, not all of the young people were utilising

their placement or engaging with the programmes and supports available to them. Staff worked with children to support them to be safe and to take responsibility for their own safety outside of the centre. However, children did leave the centre without permission and some of the children's behavior placed them at risk. Plans to support children around this behaviour had not resulted in a reduction of incidents. There was a good management structure in place and managers provided good leadership to the staff team. However some management systems required improvement, for example policies were out of date, not all risks were effectively managed and some monitoring and oversight arrangements were not always effective. The staff team were experienced and there was good teamwork between them. Areas for improvement included the statement of purpose, admissions and discharges not always being in line with children's care plans and discharges were not always reflective of child-centred practice. Improvements were also required to ensure that training was available to continually up-skill staff in meeting the needs of children currently placed.

### **OSV-0004177 (DNE) - inspection took place in May 2017**

Children had a good quality of life. At the time of the inspection, there were four children placed in the centre. Staff acted as positive role models to children and inspectors observed warm and respectful interactions between children and staff. Children told inspectors that they liked living in the centre and that their lives had improved since their admission. Parents and social workers also told inspectors that the staff team were very committed and supportive of the children. Children's rights were respected and promoted and complaints were well managed. All children had an allocated social worker. However, not all children had an up-to-date care plan in the centre. This was highlighted to the Centre Manager and an up-to-date care plan was subsequently provided to the centre by the allocated social worker. The quality of emotional and physical care provided to children was good. Children were referred to and attending specialist services. The staff team provided emotional support to children and staff were trained in specialised areas in order to support children with complex needs. All children were attending educational programmes and the staff team encouraged and supported children to attend their educational placements. Parents also told inspectors that the staff team supported children to reach positive educational outcomes. Young people's access to an aftercare service had been delayed. Three of the young people were eligible for aftercare services. However, there was a delay in all of these young people receiving an aftercare service. One young person was due to leave the centre in the coming months, however there was no clear plan in place for this young person. A young person told inspectors that there were concerned about the lack of certainty about their onward placements. Following the inspection, inspectors requested assurances from the Area Manager that an appropriate onward placement would be identified as a matter of priority and that an appropriate transition plan would be put in place for this young person. Safeguarding practices were effective in keeping children safe. All children had an allocated social worker. The staff team responded appropriately to ensure that children were safeguarded. The staff team worked closely with all relevant professionals when required and safety plans were in place to reduce any risks to young people. There was a good management structure in place and managers provided good leadership to the staff team. However, monitoring and oversight mechanisms required improvement in order to assess the quality of the service provided. The staff team were experienced and qualified. There were some gaps in mandatory training.

### **OSV-0004650 (South) - inspection took place in May 2017**

HIQA last carried out an unannounced, full inspection of the campus in August 2016 (Monitoring event number 0017923). At that time significant failings were found in relation to the care of young people, safeguarding, premises and safety and management and staffing. These issues were escalated to senior managers within Tusla who committed to implementing a number of actions to address these deficits. HIQA

carried out an unannounced follow-up inspection in December 2016 (Monitoring event number 0018200). At this time, inspectors found that insufficient progress had been made to improve the care practices within the campus. These concerns and other issues relating to behaviour management, institutional care practices and the lack of timely progress were escalated to the senior managers within Tusla's national office following the inspection. In response, an oversight group, consisting of national, regional and local managers from Tusla, was established to coordinate the response to the management of the campus and ensure timely implementation of the action plans over a six-month period. At the time of this announced, full inspection, a strategic review of the service was underway and a number of proposals as to the future of the service were being discussed with the chief operations officer. In the interim, the campus remained closed to admissions. Children who spoke with inspectors gave mixed feedback on what it was like to live in the campus. Some liked living there while others did not want to. Some said they had good relationships with staff and could go to them if feeling down. Children said they wanted to eat their meals in each of the units and not in the canteen. Children's basic care and healthcare needs were being met. Each child had an allocated social worker and had up-to-date child-in-care reviews. However, not all children's care plans reflected their current needs or circumstances so were not up to date. Inspectors found there had been improvements in some areas such as the notification of child protection concerns, some safeguarding arrangements and in some responses to children engaging in risk behaviour. However, in other areas, progress continued to be slow and some of the children continued to engage in risk-taking behaviours. A full review of care practices in the campus to ensure they were safe had not been completed. Staff in the campus were not able to ensure safe use of mobile phones for all young people. An external independent consultant had been engaged to reflect on principles and practices underpinning modern service provision with management and staff. However, progress in relation to changing how campus staff responded to children's behaviour that challenges was not timely and inspectors found staff were not clear on the approach to take to promote positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour. This impacted on some children who did not have healthy routines to their days. In addition, there had been little change to the practice of eating meals in the canteen which was institutional. In relation to the governance and management of the centre, there had been changes to the management structure and personnel within the campus since the last inspection. While the revised structure provided clear lines of authority, accountability arrangements were not sufficient as managers were not always held to account. The oversight group was to meet monthly and provide an update report to the Chief Operations Officer and to HIQA. In addition, the Tusla monitoring service had committed to a plan to monitor the campus and service-delivery improvements. This was to be completed through monthly 'verification visits' to the campus by two monitoring officers for a six month period beginning in November 2016. The oversight group had not been effective at monitoring the progress of changes on the campus, verifying that the changes had been completed and ensuring identified actions to address previously identified deficits were implemented in a timely manner. Of the 20 actions that had been identified following the last inspection, 19 should have been implemented at the time of the inspection. Inspectors found that 13 had been completed, four were delayed and two had not commenced. A number of management systems, including risk management and monitoring and oversight remained poor.