



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Quarterly Service Performance and Activity Report

QUARTER 4 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 Q4 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 Q4 2017 position regarding activity and performance.

CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE SERVICES

Referrals

- 12,498 referrals for Q3 2017; 1,765 (12%) fewer than Q2 but 766 more (7%) than Q3 2016. *Referrals are reported quarterly in arrears*
- 40,390 referrals for the first nine months of 2017, some 5,088 (14%) more than the first nine months of 2016.
- 62% (n=7,732) for child welfare concerns; 1,532 (17%) fewer than Q2
- 38% (n=4,766) for child abuse concerns; 233 (5%) fewer than Q2
- 36% (n=4,455) of referrals required an initial assessment; up two percentage points on Q2 when the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017 was reported.

Social Work Activity Data

- 24,891 cases open to social work at the end of Q4 2017; 1,028 (4%) fewer than Q3 2017 and 143 fewer than Q4 2016
- 80% (n=19,999) of open cases allocated to named social worker; no change from Q3
- 4,892 cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017; 392 (7%) fewer than Q3 2017 (n=5,284) and 521 (10%) fewer than Q4 2016.
- 17% (n=818) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were categorised as 'high priority'; down 148 from Q3 2017 and the fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017.

Child Protection Notification System

- 1,304 children listed as 'active' on the CPNS at the end of Q4 2017; 98 fewer than Q3 2017. First decrease after three consecutive increases.
- All children listed as "active" at the end of Q4 2017 had an allocated social worker.

Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service / Crisis Intervention Service

- 985 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)¹ in 2017; some 129 more than 2016 (n=856)
- 284 children were placed with the CIS in 2017; some 41 more than 2016 (n=243)
- 814 referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS) (includes service operating in Cork) in 2017, some 220 more than 2016 (n=594)
- 307 children were placed during 2017, some 70 more than 2016

ALTERNATIVE CARE SERVICES

Children in Care

- 6,189 children in care at the end of Q4 2017, down 41 from Q3 2017 and 119 from Q1 2017
- 614 children in private placements, 14 more than Q3 2017
- 95% (n=5,897) of children in care had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%); no change from Q3 2017
- 292 children awaiting allocation of a social worker; 22 fewer than Q3 2017
- 92% (n=5,699) of children in care had an up to date care plan (against a target of 90%); down one percentage point from Q3 2017
- A total of 490 children without an up-to-date care plan, 62 more than Q3 2017

Aftercare

- 2,037 young adults (all ages) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q4 2017; highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q4 2017
- 85% (n=1,674/1,963) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an allocated aftercare worker; down one percentage point on Q3
- 87% (n=1,709/1,963) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an aftercare plan; up three percentage points on Q3
- 172 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years; 560 discharged 2017
- 76% (n=130) of those discharged in Q4 had an allocated aftercare worker

Adoption

- 167 new applications to commence tracing for a searched person in Q4 2017; 922 received in 2017
- 729 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q4 2017; down 99 (12%) on Q3. Fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017.
- All but one service meeting the target of eight weeks or less from time of application to provision of non-identifying information
- 52 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received in Q4 2017; 190 received in 2017
- 35 new children were referred for adoption in Q4 2017; 177 referred in 2017
- 43 completed adoption assessments presented to Local Adoption Committees in Q4 2017; 152 presented in 2017

Foster Carers

- 4,384 foster carers on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q4 2017; 59 fewer than Q3 2017 and 153 fewer than Q4 2016
- 80% (n=(1,152/1,443)) of relative foster carers approved against a target of 80%
- 93% (n=2,551) of general foster carers had an allocated link (target 90%). A total of 205 awaiting; down 30 on Q3
- 87% (n=1,003) of approved relative foster carers had an allocated link worker (target of 85%), Total of 149 awaiting allocation; up 12 on Q3
- 291 unapproved relative foster carer; down 11 on Q3
- 251 (86%) of the unapproved relative foster carers had a child placed with them for longer than 12 week
- 88% (n=221) of unapproved relative foster carers with a child placed > 12 weeks had an allocated link (social) worker; up eight percentage points on Q3. Total of 30 carers awaiting in three areas (Cork (23), DSW/K/WW (5) and MidWest (2)).

REGULATION & SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Early Years Services

- 4,484 EYS on the register nationally at the end of Q4 2017; 16 fewer than Q3 2017 and 23 fewer than Q4 2016
- 632 EYS inspections (all types) carried out during Q4 2017; 82 (15%) more than Q3 2017, bringing the total number of inspections for 2017 to 2,033.
- 55 complaints received in respect of EYS during Q4 2017 bringing the total number of 2017 to 295

Alternative Education Regulation

Home Education

- 1,377 children on the register for home education at the end of Q4 2017; 55 more than Q4 2016
- 569 applications received for home education in 2017
- 330 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q4 2017; 189 more than Q4 2016
- 762 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q4 2017

Independent Schools

- 4,904 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q4 2017
- 1,330 new children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,637
- 1,166 children registered during 2017
- 955 children awaiting registration at the end of Q4 2017

Non-Statutory Alternative Care Services

- 117 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q4 2017
- 26 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 96
- 6 non statutory foster care services at the end of Q4 2017

EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES

Educational Welfare Services

- 933 new individual children worked with between Sept – Dec 2017
- 998 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Dec 2017
- 265 school attendance notices (SANs) issued in respect of 175 children under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000¹, between Sept – Dec 2017
- 47 summonses issued in respect of 35 children under Section 25 of the Act, between Sept – Dec 2017
- 92 Section 24 meetings convened by EWOs, in the academic 2016/2017

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Family Support Services

- At least 21,526 children in receipt of family support services at the end of December 2017
- At least 39,065 children referred to family support services in 2017
- At least 73% (28,562) of children referred to family support services in 2017 received a service

Meitheal

- 1,409 Meitheal processes requested in 2017
- 52% (736) requested through Direct Access, 39% (554) requested through Social Work Diversion and 8% (119) Social Work Step Down
- 54% (766) of Meitheal processes requested in 2017 proceeded to Stage 2 (Discussion Stage)
- 655 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage 2 in 2017; 73% (475) of these proceeded to Stage 3 (Delivery)
- 794 Meitheal processes were closed in 2017; 54% (425) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form; 14% (111) closed following completion of Stage 2; 10% (76) closed following commencement of Stage 3 and 23% (182) closed post- delivery.
- 99 Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN) operating at the end of December 2017, with a further 35 planned.

HUMAN RESOURCES OVERVIEW

Human Resources

- 3,696 (WTE) employed by the Agency at the end of Q4 2017; 52 more than Q3 2017 and 99 more than Q4 2016
- 394 new staff came on to the Agency's payroll in 2017
- 337 staff left (incl. retirements) the Agency in 2017
- 150 staff on maternity leave (incl. 40 unpaid) at the end of December 2017
- 503 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of December 2017
- 4.83% absence rate (Nov 2017); 0.17 percentage points lower than Q3 2017
- 704 courses run by Workforce Learning & Development during Q4 2017; 11,028 persons attended

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Finance

- The financial outturn for 2017 an under-spend of €5.405 million
- Pay costs are under-spent against budget by €13.190 million
- Non pay costs are over-spent against budget by €10.602 million
- Key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €9.228 million over budget
- 46% (€13.862 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)

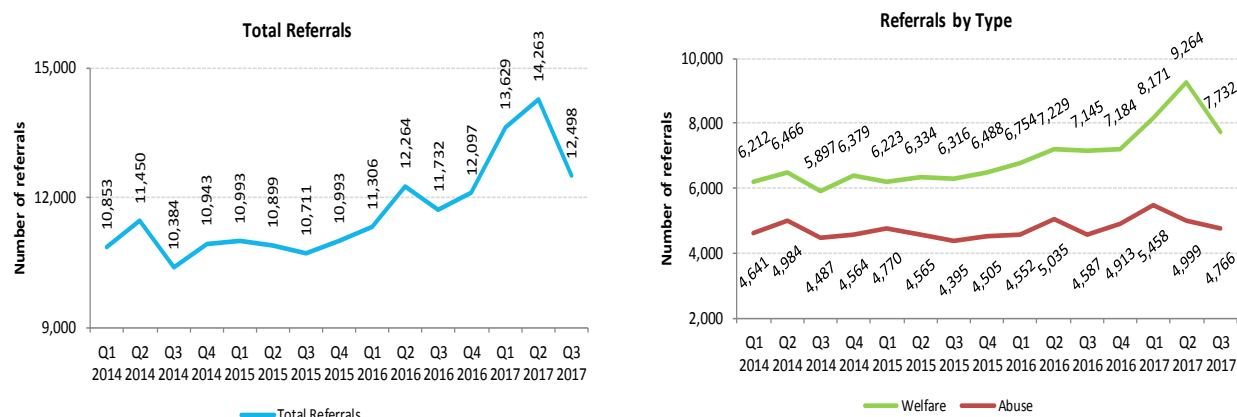
Key Facts

- 12,498 referrals for Q3 2017; 1,765 (12%) fewer than Q2 but 766 more (7%) than Q3 2016.
- 40,390 referrals for the first nine months of 2017, some 5,088 (14%) more than the first nine months of 2016.
- 62% (n=7,732) for child welfare concerns; 1,532 (17%) fewer than Q2
- 38% (n=4,766) for child abuse concerns; 233 (5%) fewer than Q2
- 36% (n=4,455) of referrals required an initial assessment; up two percentage points on Q2 when the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017 was reported.

Number of Referrals

- 12,498 referrals to Child Protection and Welfare Service during Q3 2017¹; 1,765 (12%) fewer than Q2 2017 but 766 (7%) more than Q3 2016 (Fig. 1). This brings to 40,390 the number of referrals for the first nine months of 2017, some 5,088 (14%) more than the first nine months of 2016. It is expected that the total number of referrals for 2017 will exceed 50,000.
- 62% (n=7,732) of referrals for Q3 2017 were for child welfare concerns; 1,532 (17%) fewer than Q2 2017. The remaining 38% (n=4,766) were for child abuse/neglect concerns; 233 (5%) fewer than Q2 2017.

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

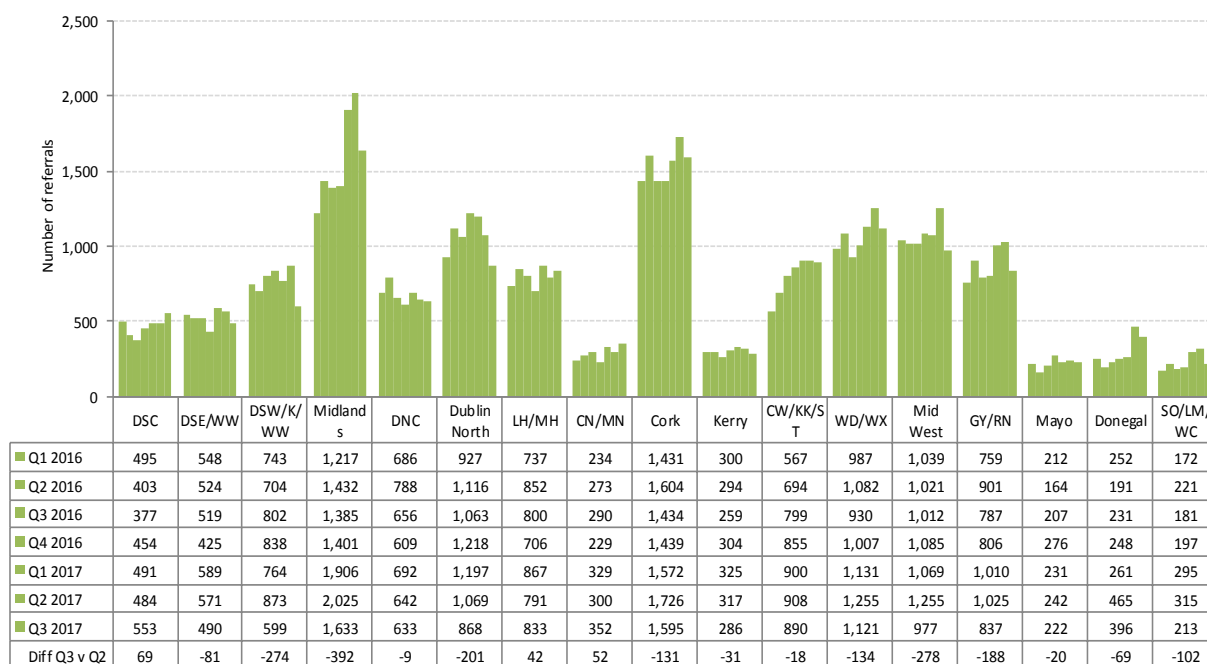


¹ Data on referrals are reported quarterly in arrears.

Referrals by Area

- Three areas (Midlands, Cork and Waterford/Wexford) reported in excess of 1,000 referrals in Q3 2017 with a further eight areas reporting between 500 and 1,000 referrals (Figure 2).
- 3 areas reported an increase in referrals from Q2 2017; Dublin South Central (up 69), Louth/Meath (up 42) and Cavan/Monaghan (up 52).
- 14 areas reported a decrease. The highest decrease was reported by the Midlands area (down 392) followed by the MidWest (down 278) and DSW/K/WW (down 274).

Figure 2: Referrals by area Q1 2016 – Q3 2017



Rate of Referrals

- 12,498 referrals equates to about 10.5 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 20.4/1,000 children, almost double the national rate followed by WD/WX (16.4/1,000) (Table 1). The lowest rate was reported by DSW/K/WW (5.5 /1,000) followed by Dublin South East/Wicklow (5.6/1,000 children).
- Five areas (Midlands, Dublin North City, Cork, CW/KK/ST and WD/WX) reported a rate higher than the national rate of 10.5/1,000 population under 18 years.

Table 1: Rate of referrals

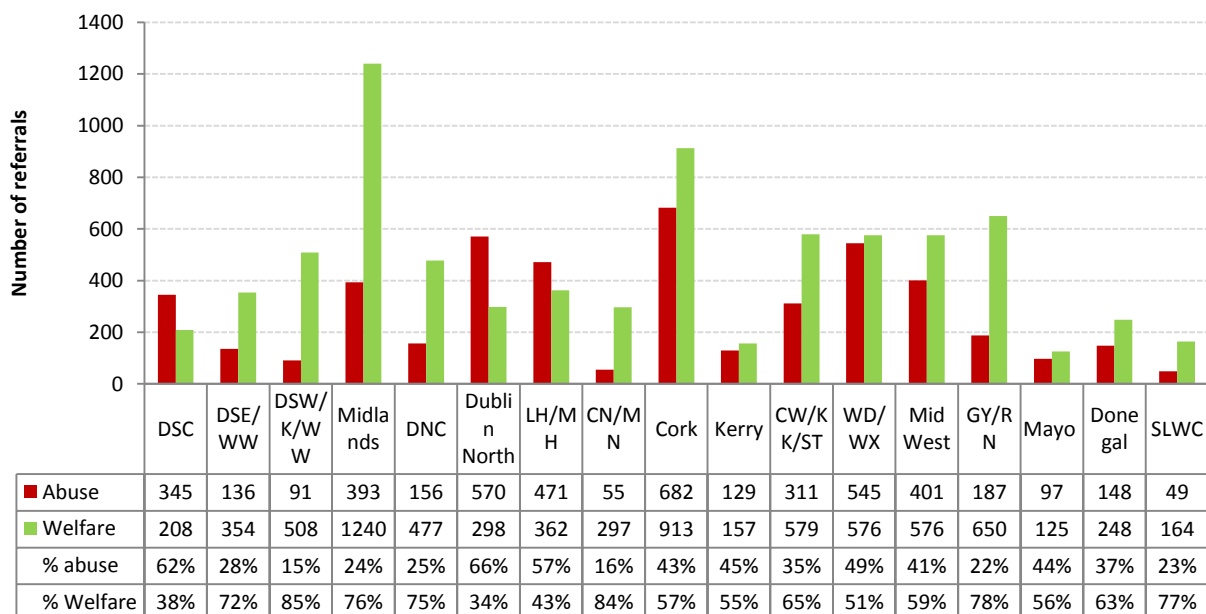
Area	Referrals Q3 2017	Population 0-17 years*	Rate / 1,000 population 0 – 17 years
DSC	553	65,564	8.4
DSE/WW	490	86,810	5.6
DSW/K/WW	599	108,186	5.5
Midlands	1633	80,193	20.4
DNC	633	44,927	14.1
Dublin North	868	100,654	8.6
LH/MH	833	93,093	8.9
CN/MN	352	36,446	9.7
Cork	1,595	134,015	11.9
Kerry	286	34,527	8.3
CW/KK/ST	890	63,009	14.1
WD/WX	1,121	68,513	16.4
MidWest	977	96,266	10.1
GY/RN	837	79,912	10.5
Mayo	222	31,968	6.9
Donegal	396	42,865	9.2
SLWC	213	23,554	9.0
National	12,498	1,190,502	10.5

*CSO Census 2016

Referrals by Area and Type

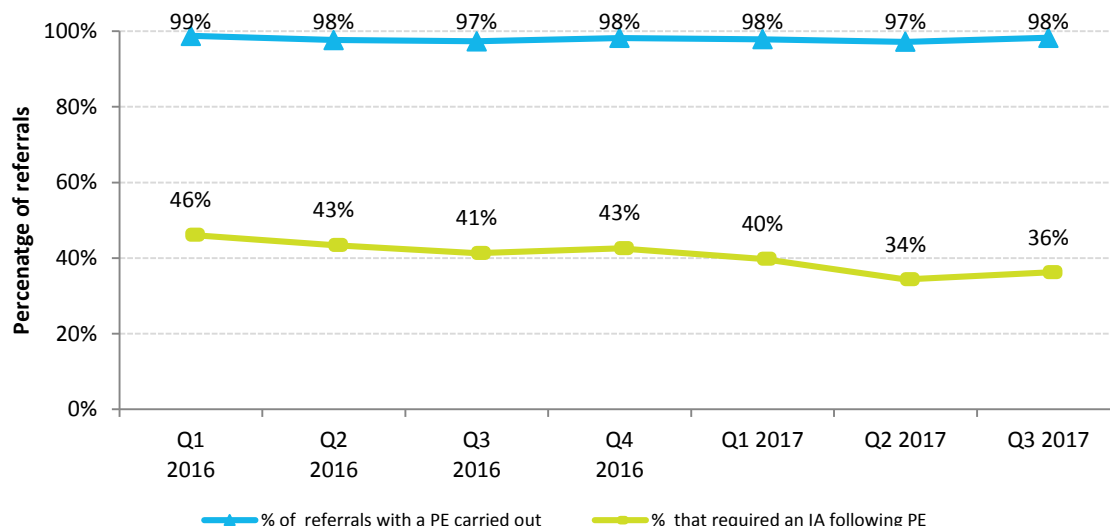
- An area breakdown of referrals by type (abuse / welfare) for Q3 2017 is presented in the chart below (Figure 3).
- Nationally, there was 38:62 split between referrals of abuse/neglect and welfare. This varied across the areas and ranged from a 66:34 split for Dublin North to a 15:85 split for DSW/K/WW. Eight areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 38% for abuse.

Figure 3: Breakdown of referrals by type and area



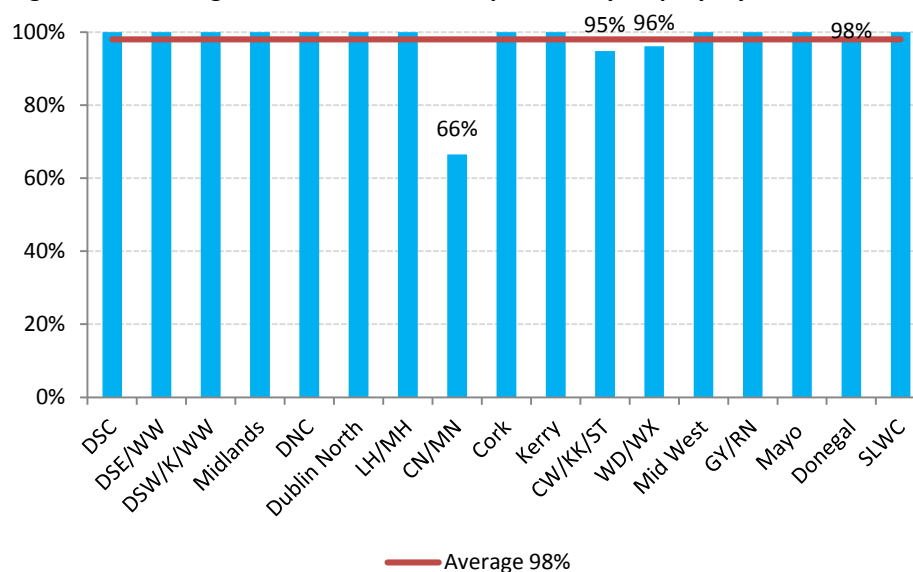
- 98% (n=12,281) of referrals for Q3 2017 had a preliminary enquiry² carried out; up one percentage point from Q2 2017 (Figure 4).
- 36% (n=4,445) of referrals that had a preliminary enquiry required an initial assessment³; up two percentage points from Q2 2017 when the lowest percentage for the period Q1 2016 – Q2 2017 was reported.

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



- A preliminary enquiry was carried out on all referrals (Q3 2017) in 13 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

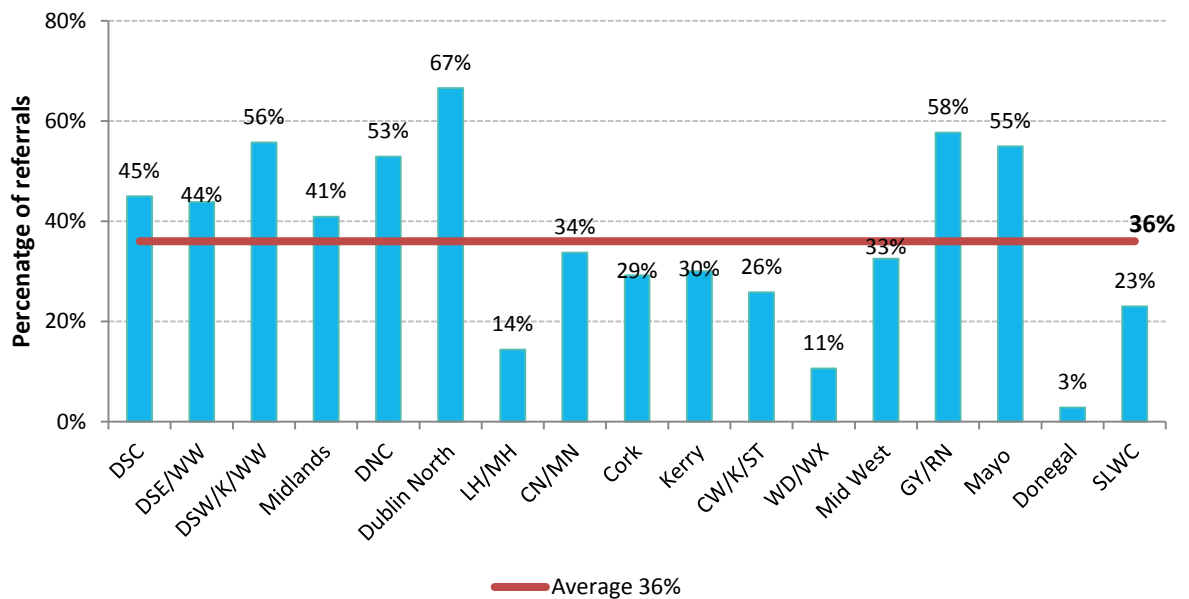


² The preliminary enquiries step is concerned with substantiating the details provided by the reporter e.g. verify reporters phone number, child's address, concern, check if the child is already known to the service, other network checks etc. A preliminary enquiry is not an assessment. The aim of the 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.

³ 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.

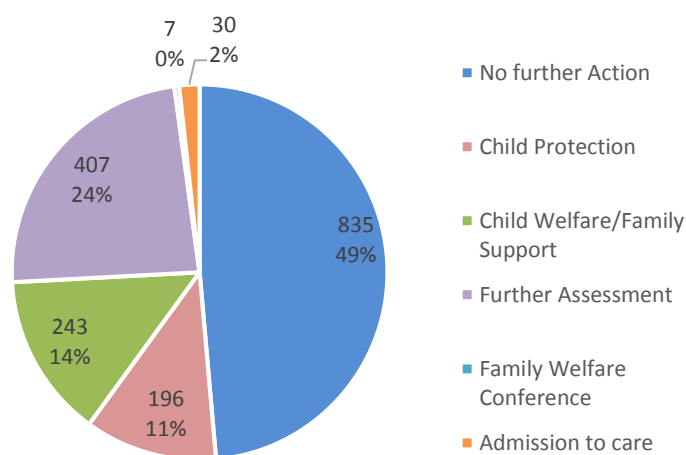
- The percentage of referrals requiring an initial assessment following a preliminary enquiry ranged from 67% (578) in Dublin North to 3% (11) in Donegal (Figure 6). Nine areas reported a percentage below the national average of 36%.

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



- The outcome of initial assessment was recorded for 1,718 referrals (Q3 2017) (Figure 7)
- 'No further action' was recorded in all almost half of cases (49%; n=835) of cases.
- Admission to care was recorded for 2% (n=30) of cases and 'child protection⁴' was recorded for 11% (n=196) cases.

Figure 7: Breakdown of actions recorded following initial assessment



⁴ 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)

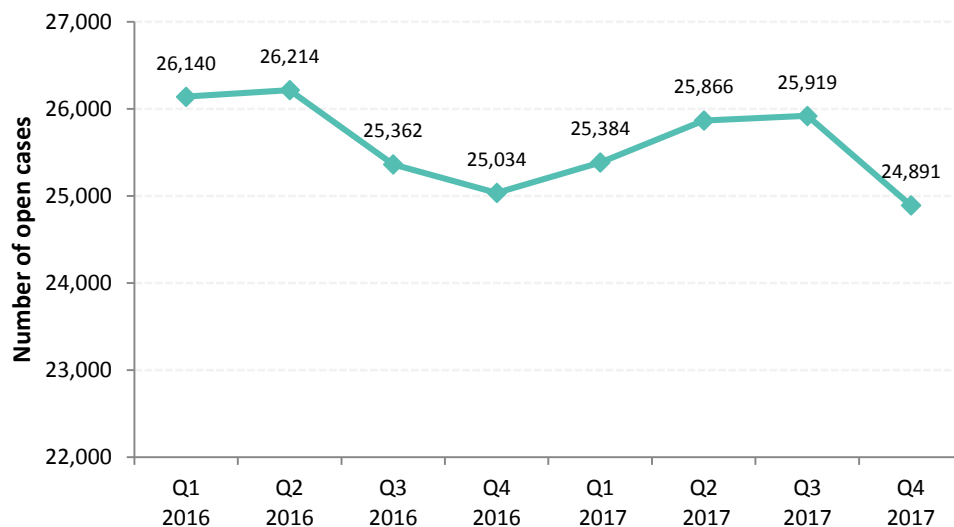
Key Facts

- 24,891 cases open to social work at the end of Q4 2017; 1,028 (4%) fewer than Q3 2017 and 143 fewer than Q4 2016
- 80% (n=19,999) of open cases allocated to named social worker; no change from Q3
- 4,892 cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017; 392 (7%) fewer than Q3 2017 (n=5,284) and 521 (10%) fewer than Q4 2016.
- 17% (n=818) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were categorised as 'high priority'; down 148 from Q3 2017 and the fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017.

2.2.1 Open Cases

- 24,891 cases open⁵ to social work nationally at the end of Q4 2017; 1,028 (4%) fewer than Q3 2017 and 143 fewer than Q4 2016 (Figure 8).

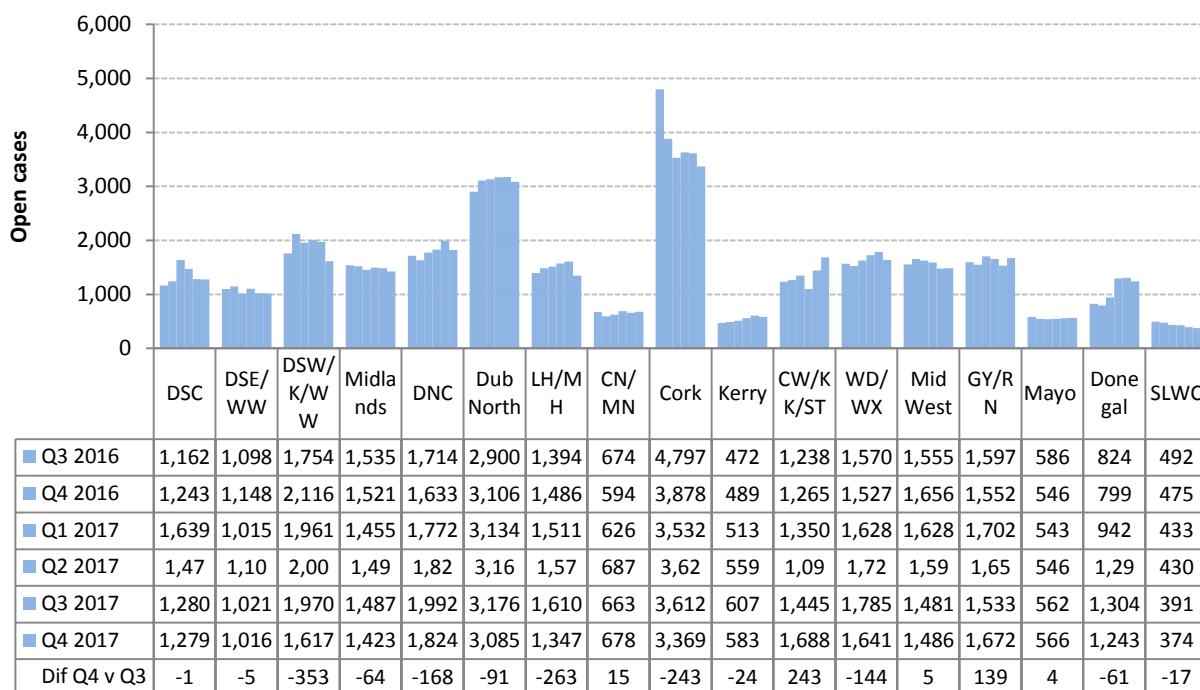
Figure 8: Number of open cases by quarter



- The number of open cases ranged from 3,369 (14%) in Cork to 374 (less than 2%) in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan (Figure 9) with an average of 1,464 per area. Eleven of the 17 areas had between 1,000 and 2,000 cases; four areas had fewer than 1,000 cases while the remaining two areas (Cork and Dublin North) had in excess of 3,000 cases.
- Five areas reported an increase in open cases from Q3 2017. The highest increase was reported by CW/KK/ST (n=243) followed by GY/RN (n=139).
- DSW/K/WW reported the highest decrease (n=353) followed by LH/MH (n=263) and Cork (n=243).

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

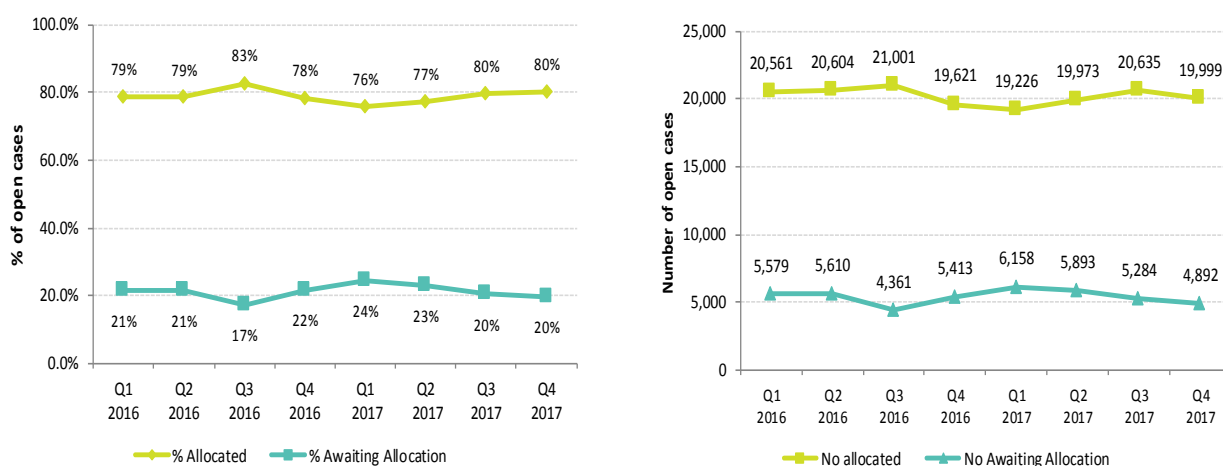
Figure 9: Number of open cases by area



2.2.2 Open Cases Allocated / Awaiting Allocation

- 80% (n=19,999/24,891) of open cases were allocated to a named social worker at the end of Q4 2017; no change from Q3 2017 (Figure 10).
- 4,892 (20%) cases were awaiting allocation; 392 (7%) fewer than Q3 2017 (n=5,284) and 521 (10%) fewer than Q4 2016. Almost one-third (32%; n=1,560) of cases awaiting were “active” on a duty system⁶. *Figure (1,560) based on returns from 15/17 areas.*

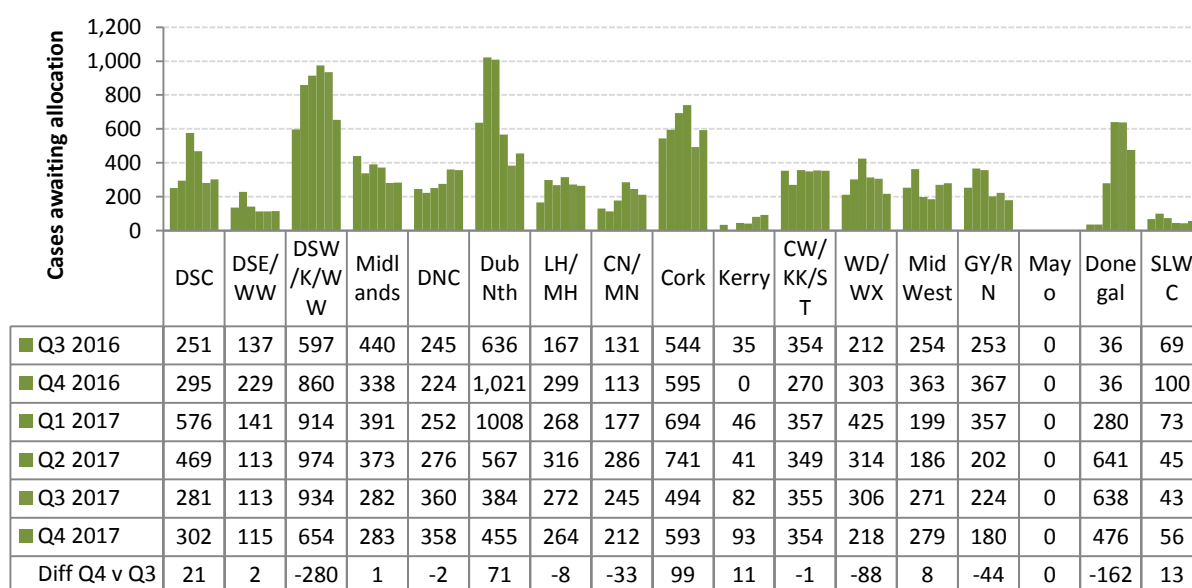
Figure 10: Cases allocated/awaiting allocation



⁶ 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.

- DSW/K/WW (n=654) reported the highest number of cases awaiting allocation followed by Cork (n=593), Donegal (n=476) and Dublin North (n=455) (Figure 11).
- Eight areas reported a decrease from Q3 2017 in the number of cases awaiting allocation (Figure 11). DSW/K/WW reported the highest decrease (n=280; 30%) followed by Donegal (n=162; 25%).
- Eight areas reported an increase from Q3 2017. The highest increase was reported by Cork (n=99) followed by Dublin North (n=71).
- Mayo reported no cases awaiting allocation for the sixth consecutive quarter.

Figure 11: Number of open cases awaiting allocation by area

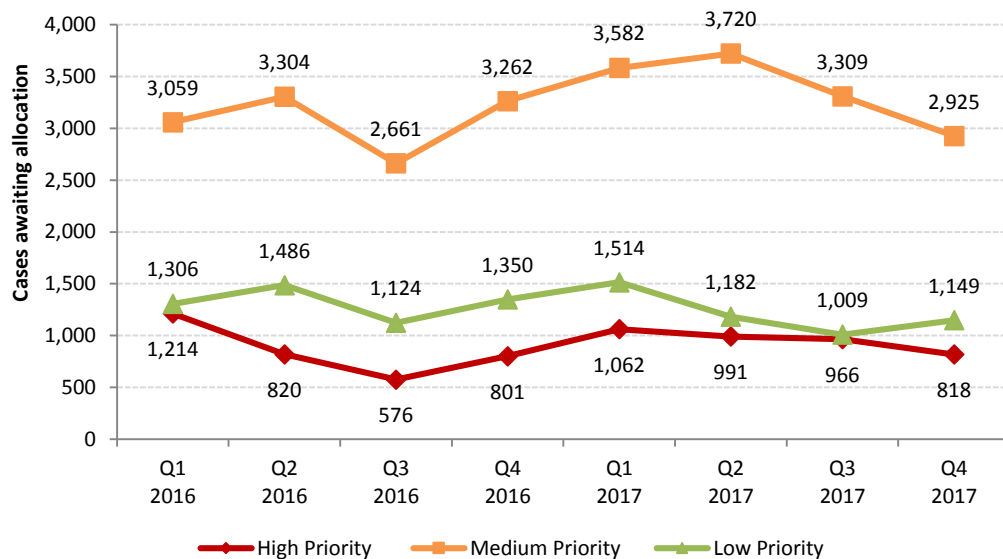


2.2.3 Cases Awaiting Allocation by Priority Level⁷

- 17% (n=818) of cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were categorised as 'high priority'; down 148 from Q3 2017 and the fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017 (Figure 12).
- 60% of cases (n=2,925) awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were categorised as 'medium priority', down 384 (12%) on Q3 2017 while the remaining 23% (n=1,149) were categorised as 'low priority'; up 140 on Q3 2017.

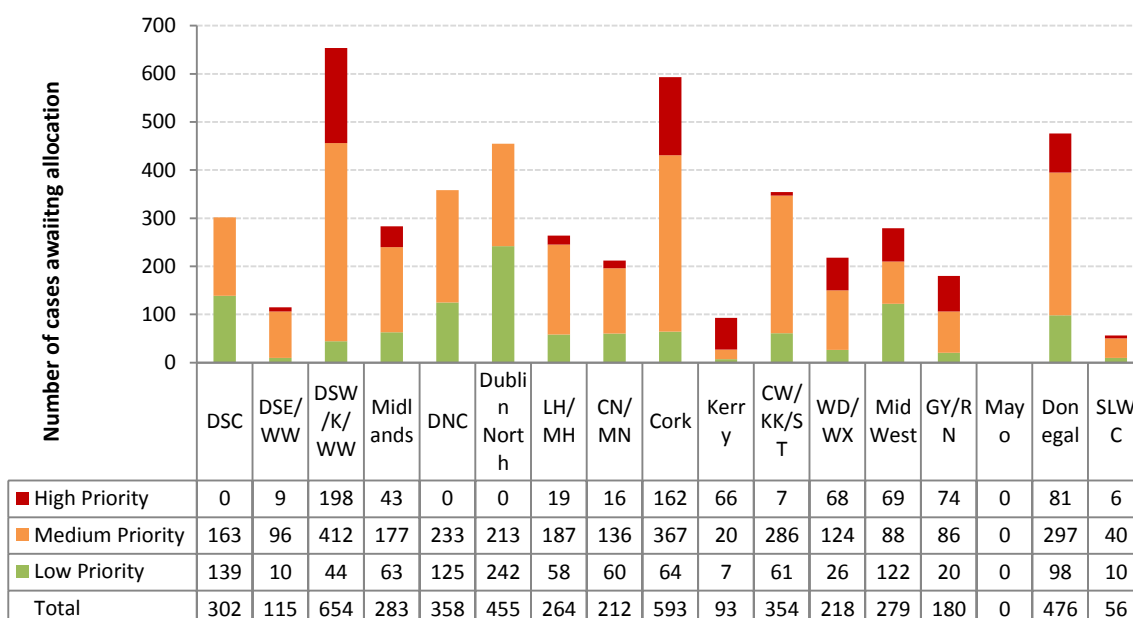
⁷ The priority level as per the guidance outlined in 'Measuring the Pressure' V2. Note: The priority levels in this guidance are currently under national review to ensure that the priority levels identified equate with categorisation of risk. A recent national review highlighted cases being categorised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

Figure 12: Cases awaiting allocation by priority level



- Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow reported the highest number (n=198) of 'high priority' cases awaiting allocation, followed by Cork (n=162); and Donegal (n=81) (Figure 13).
- Dublin South Central, Dublin North City and Dublin North reported no 'high priority' cases awaiting allocation while Mayo reported no cases awaiting allocation.

Figure 13: Area breakdown of cases awaiting allocation by priority level, Q4 2017



2.2.4 Cases Awaiting Allocation by Waiting Time

Analysis for this section is based on data returns from 15/17 areas (4,360 cases awaiting allocation – the length of time waiting was not available for the remaining 532 cases). Hence comparison with previous quarters is not meaningful.

- 53% (n=385/731) of cases categorised as ‘high priority’ awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were waiting less than 3 months (Table 2).
- 52% (n=1,340/2,588) of cases categorised as ‘medium priority’ were waiting less than 3 months at the end of Q4 2017 (Table 2).
- 50% (n=522/1,041) of cases categorised as ‘low priority’ were waiting less than 3 months at the end of Q4 2017 (Table 2).
- Majority (52%; n=2,247) of all cases awaiting allocation at the end of Q4 2017 were waiting less than 3 months.

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

High Priority / Time Waiting	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017 Based on data from 15/17 areas
1 week	79	54	137	81	5
1-2 weeks	79	96	20	104	120
2-3 weeks	80	97	64	82	19
3-4 weeks	69	124	93	100	52
1-2 months	116	160	152	122	118
2-3 months	94	95	99	120	71
>3 months	284	436	426	357	346
Total	801	1,062	991	966	731
Medium Priority / Time Waiting	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017
1 week	247	342	208	176	89
1-2 weeks	350	290	249	272	215
2-3 weeks	232	284	250	206	129
3-4 weeks	275	283	218	277	190
1-2 months	574	619	682	474	353
2-3 months	434	285	454	337	364
>3 months	1,150	1,479	1,659	1,567	1,248
Total	3,262	3,582	3,720	3,309	2,588
Low Priority / Time Waiting	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q2 2017	Q4 2017
1 week	65	49	75	45	13
1-2 weeks	91	80	54	62	17

2-3 weeks	48	146	44	57	14
3-4 weeks	90	133	71	92	123
1-2 months	249	227	204	98	224
2-3 months	178	283	181	82	131
>3 months	629	596	553	573	519
Total	1,350	1,514	1,182	1,009	1,041

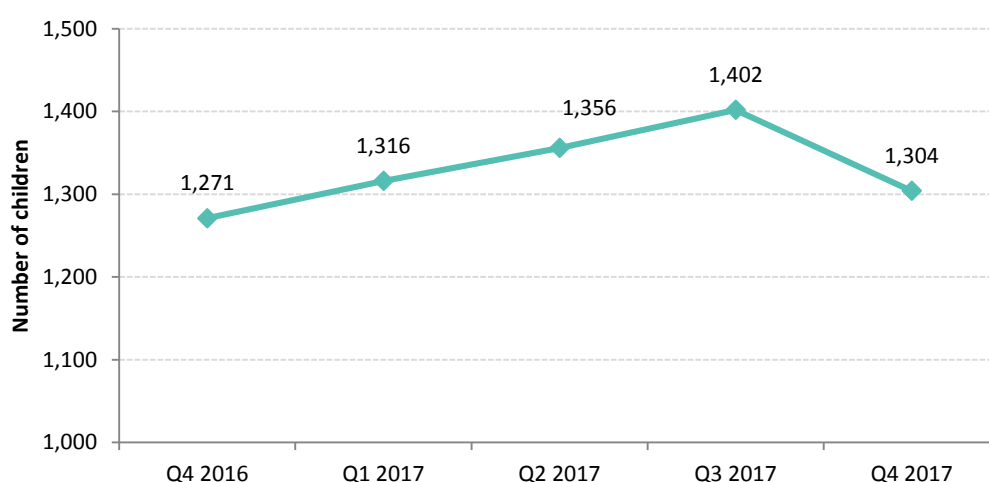
2.3 CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

KEY FACTS

- 1,304 children listed as 'active' on the CPNS at the end of Q4 2017; 98 fewer than Q3 2017. First decrease after three consecutive increases.
- All children listed as "active" at the end of Q4 2017 had an allocated social worker.

- 1,304 children listed as 'active' on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)⁸ at the end of Q4 2017; 98 fewer than Q3 2017 and the first decrease after three consecutive increases (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. *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 11 children per 10,000 population under 18 years and ranges from 5/10,000 population in DSW/K/WW to 18/10,000 in the Midwest area (Table 3).
- Cork, DSW/K/WW and Dublin North with the higher proportions of the under 18 population reported some of the lowest rates and fall well below the national average (Table 3).
- Kerry, Mayo and Donegal with the smaller proportions of the under 18 population reported rates above the national average. Mayo reporting the second highest rate at 16/10,000 population.

⁸ 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.

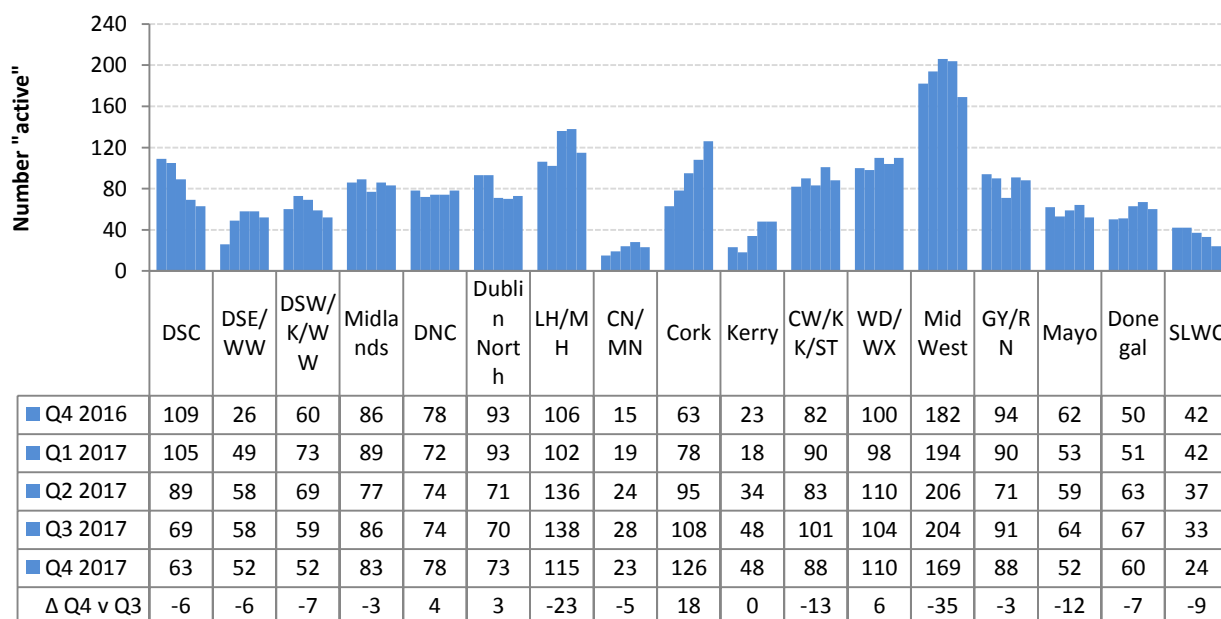
Table 3: Children listed as 'active' on CPNS per 10,000 population 0-17 years

Area	# Q4 2017	Population 0-17 years	Rate / 10,000 pop
DSC	63	65,564	10
DSE/WW	52	86,810	6
DSW/K/WW	52	108,186	5
Midlands	83	80,193	10
Dublin North City	78	44,927	17
Dublin North	73	100,654	7
LH/MH	115	93,093	12
CN/MN	23	36,446	6
Cork	126	134,015	9
Kerry	48	34,527	14
CW/KK/ST	88	63,009	14
WD/WX	110	68,513	16
Mid West	169	96,266	18
GY/RN	88	79,912	11
Mayo	52	31,968	16
Donegal	60	42,865	14
SLWC	24	23,554	10
National	1,304	1,190,502	11

Population: Census 2016

- Four areas reported an increase from Q3 2017 (Figure 15). The highest increase was reported by Cork (n=18) followed to a lesser extent by WD/WX (n=6), Dublin North City (n=4) and Dublin North (n=3). Cork has reported four consecutive increases and is up 63 from Q4 2016 (Figure 15).
- Twelve areas reported a decrease from Q3 2017. The highest decrease was reported by MidWest (n=35), the area with the highest number of children listed as active and is followed by Louth/Meath (n=23) and CW/KK/ST (n=13). Dublin South Central reported four consecutive decreases and is down 46 from Q4 2016.

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



- 47% (n=616) of children listed as “active” in Q4 2017 were listed for 0-6 months; 29% (n=376) were listed for 7-12 months; 12% (n=150) were listed for 12-18 months; 5% (n=62) were listed for 18-24 months while the remaining 8% (n=100) were listed for longer than 24 months (Table 4).
- Listed for > 24 months: Highest percentage (43%; n=27/63) reported by Dublin South Central. Six areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 8% (DSC 43%; Dublin North City 19%; GY/RN 18%; Mayo 12%; Dublin North 11% and CW/KK/ST 9%). Four areas (CN/MN, Cork, Kerry and WD/WX) reported no child listed as active for >24 months. Kerry had no child listed as “active” for longer than 18 months.
- Listed for < 6 months: Highest percentage (64%; n=53/83) reported by Midlands followed closely by GY/RN (61%; n=54/88). Lowest percentage (16%; n=10/63) reported by Dublin South Central. Eight areas reported a percentage higher than the national average of 47%.

Table 4: Children listed as 'active' in each area at the end of Q4 2017, by length of time 'active'

	0-6	% 0-6	7-12	% 7-12	12-18	% 12-18	18-24	% 18-24	>24	% > 24	Total
DSC	10	16%	12	19%	4	6%	10	16%	27	43%	63
DSE/WW	22	42%	24	46%	5	10%	0	0%	1	2%	52
DSW/K/WW	25	48%	13	25%	9	17%	4	8%	1	2%	52
Midlands	53	64%	23	28%	4	5%	1	1%	2	2%	83
DNC	32	41%	21	27%	8	10%	2	3%	15	19%	78
Dublin North	39	53%	14	19%	5	7%	7	10%	8	11%	73
LH/MH	52	45%	27	23%	18	16%	13	11%	5	4%	115
CN/MN	7	30%	13	57%	1	4%	2	9%	0	0%	23
Cork	68	54%	38	30%	17	13%	3	2%	0	0%	126
Kerry	24	50%	14	29%	10	21%	0	0%	0	0%	48
CW/KK/ST	50	57%	21	24%	7	8%	2	2%	8	9%	88
WD/WX	50	45%	46	42%	13	12%	1	1%	0	0%	110
Mid West	67	40%	71	42%	20	12%	6	4%	5	3%	169
GY/RN	54	61%	8	9%	7	8%	3	3%	16	18%	88
Mayo	23	44%	17	33%	5	10%	1	2%	6	12%	52
Donegal	27	45%	12	20%	10	17%	7	12%	4	7%	60
SLWC	13	54%	2	8%	7	29%	0	0%	2	8%	24
National	616	47%	376	29%	150	12%	62	5%	100	8%	1,304

- All children listed as “active” at the end of Q4 2017 had an allocated social worker.
- 25 children listed as active at the end of Q4 2017 were reactivated on the CPNS (i.e., their status changed from ‘inactive’ to ‘active’) during Q4 2017. The MidWest area reported the highest number (n=7) of children who were reactivated followed by CW/KK/ST (n=6) and WD/WX (n=5).

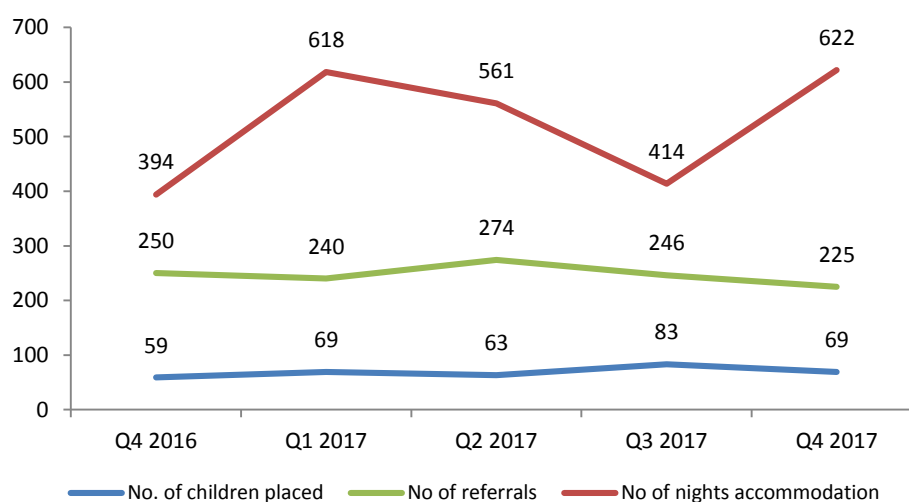
2.4 EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS SOCIAL WORK SERVICE / CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICE

KEY FACTS

- 985 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)¹ in 2017; some 129 more than 2016 (n=856)
- 284 children were placed with the CIS in 2017; some 41 more than 2016 (n=243)
- 814 referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS) (includes service operating in Cork) in 2017, some 220 more than 2016 (n=594)
- 307 children were placed during 2017, some 70 more than 2016

- 225 referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS)⁹ during Q4 2017; 21 fewer than Q3 2017 and the fewest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q4 2017. This brings to 985 the number of referrals for 2017, some 129 more than 2016 (n=856). (Figure 16).
- 69 children were placed with the CIS during Q4 2017; 14 fewer than Q3 2017 but 10 more than Q4 2016. This brings to 284 the number of children placed during 2017, some 41 more than 2016 (n=243). *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.*
- 622 nights' accommodation was supplied by the CIS during Q4 2017; 208 more than Q3 2017 and the highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q4 2017. This brings to 2,215 the number of nights' accommodation supplied during 2017, some 535 more than 2016 (n=1,680).

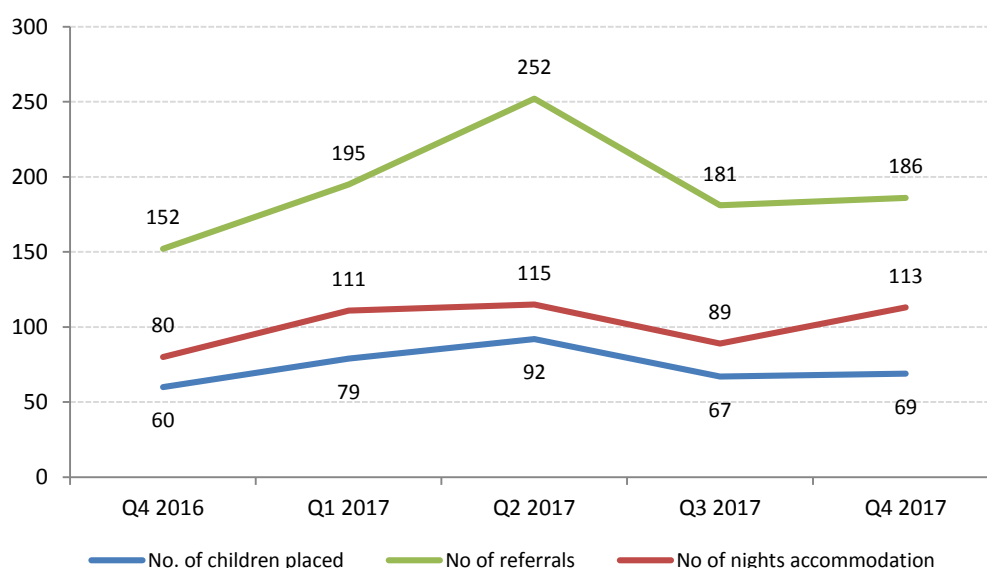
Figure 16: Referrals to the Crisis Intervention Service by quarter



⁹ 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

- 186 referrals to the Emergency out of Hours Social Work Service (EOHS)¹⁰ (includes service operating in Cork)¹¹ during Q4 2017; five more than Q3 2017 and 34 more than Q4 2016. This brings to 814 the number of referrals for 2017, some 220 more than 2016 (n=594) (Figure 17).
- 69 children were placed during Q4 2017, two more than Q3 2017 and nine more than Q4 2016. This brings to 307 the number of children placed during 2017, some 70 more than 2016 (n=237).
- 113 nights' accommodation were supplied during Q4 2017; 24 more than Q3 2017 and 33 more than Q4 2016. This brings to 428 the number of nights' accommodation supplied in 2017, some 65 more than 2016 (n=363).

Figure 17: Referrals to the Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service by quarter



¹⁰ 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 1991¹⁰ and referrals made under section 8(5) of the Refugee Act 1996.

¹¹ 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)

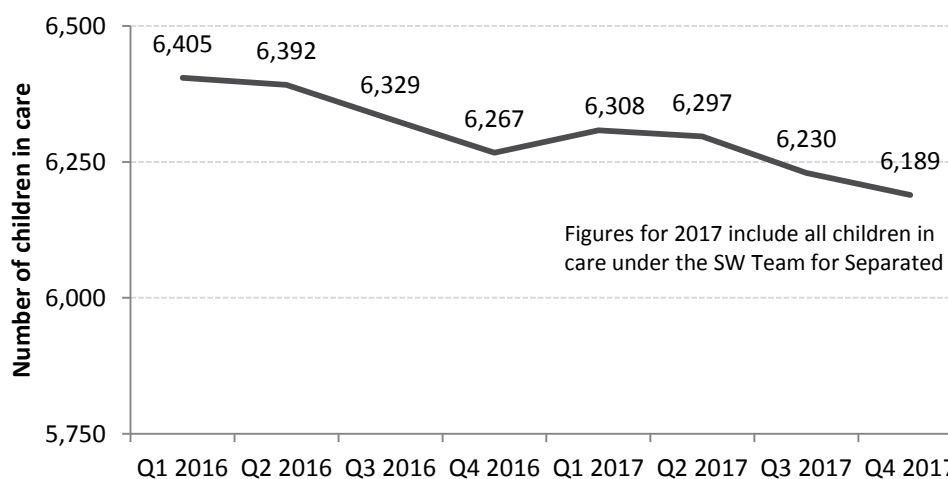
KEY FACTS

- 6,189 children in care at the end of Q4 2017, down 41 from Q3 2017 and 119 from Q1 2017
- 614 children in private placements, 14 more than Q3 2017
- 95% (n=5,897) of children in care had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%); no change from Q3 2017
- 292 children awaiting allocation of a social worker; 22 fewer than Q3 2017
- 92% (n=5,699) of children in care had an up to date care plan (against a target of 90%); down one percentage point from Q3 2017
- A total of 490 children without an up-to-date care plan, 62 more than Q3 2017

3.1.1 Number of Children in Care

- 6,189 children in care at the end of Q4 2017, down 41 from Q3 2017 and 119 (2%) 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, Q1 2016 – Q4 2017



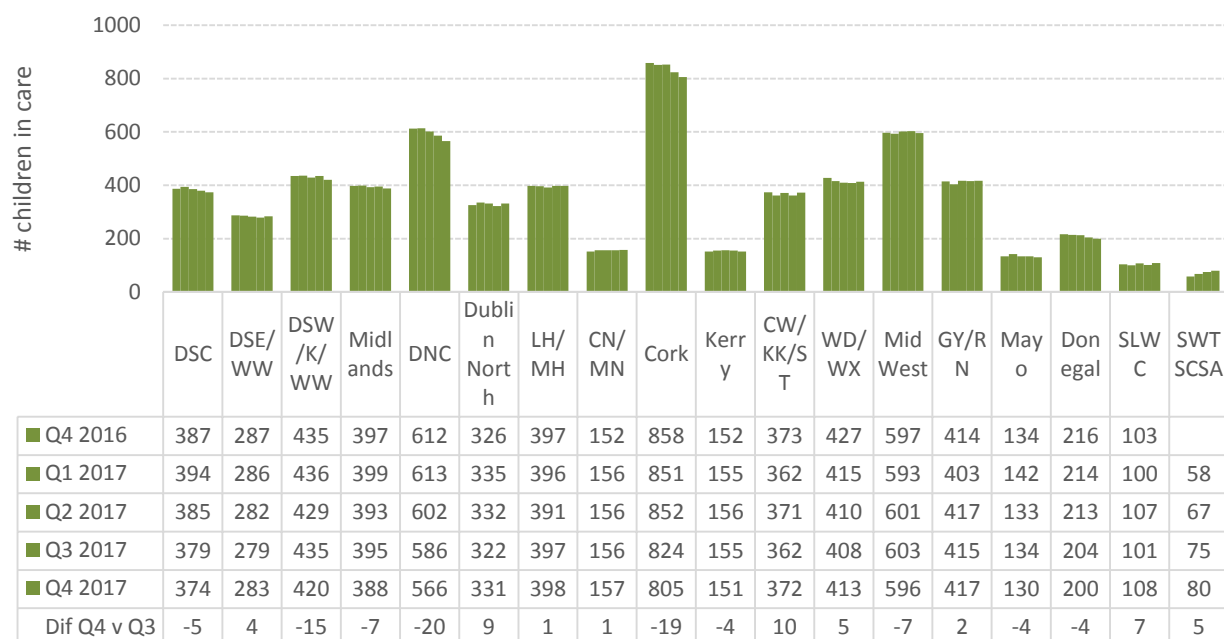
- Across the 17 areas, the number of children in care ranged from 805 in Cork to 108 in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan (Table 5).
- Dublin North City reported the highest rate of children in care per 1,000 population under 18 years at 2.5 times (13/1,000) the national rate. Dublin South East/Wicklow and Dublin North reported the lowest rates at 3.3/1,000 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, Q4 2017

Area	0-17 population (Census 2016)	No CIC Q4 2017	No of CIC/1,000 population 0-17
DSC	65,564	374	5.7
DSE/WW	86,810	283	3.3
DSW/K/WW	108,186	420	3.9
Midlands	80,193	388	4.8
DNC	44,927	566	12.6
Dublin North	100,654	331	3.3
LH/MH	93,093	398	4.3
CN/MN	36,446	157	4.3
Cork	134,015	805	6.0
Kerry	34,527	151	4.4
CW/KK/ST	63,009	372	5.9
WD/WX	68,513	413	6.0
Mid West	96,266	596	6.2
GY/RN	79,912	417	5.2
Mayo	31,968	130	4.1
Donegal	42,865	200	4.7
SLWC	23,554	108	4.6
SWTSCSA	-	80	
Total	1,190,502	6,189	5.2

- Eight areas along with the SWTSCSA reported an increase in children in care from Q3 2017; the highest increase was reported by the CW/KK/ST (n=10) followed by Dublin North (n=9) and SLWC (n=7).
- Dublin North City reported the highest decrease (n=20) followed closely by Cork (n=19).
- Five areas had more children in care at the end of Q4 2017 than Q4 2016; Dublin North (up 5), CN/MN (up 5), SLWC (up 5), GY/RN (up 3) and LH/MH (up 1). Of the 12 remaining areas, Cork and Dublin North City reported the highest decreases down 53 and 46 respectively.

Figure 19: Breakdown of the number of children in care in each area, Q4 2016– Q4 2017



3.1.2 Number of Children in Care by Care Type

- 92% (n=5,702) of children in care were in foster care (general and relative) at the end of Q4 2017, down 27 on Q3 2017 and 5.5% (n=338) were in a residential (general) placement, down 13 on Q3 2017 (Table 6).

Table 6: Breakdown of the number of children in care by care type and month, Q1 2017 – Q4 2017

	FC Gen	Δ+/- prev Q	FC Rel	Δ+/- prev Q	Res Care Gen	Δ+/- prev Q	Res Care Spec	Δ+/- prev Q	Other Care 12	Δ+/- prev Q	Total	Δ+/- prev Q
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
Q4 2017	4,041	-12	1,661	-15	338	-13	12	+2	137	-3	6,189	-41

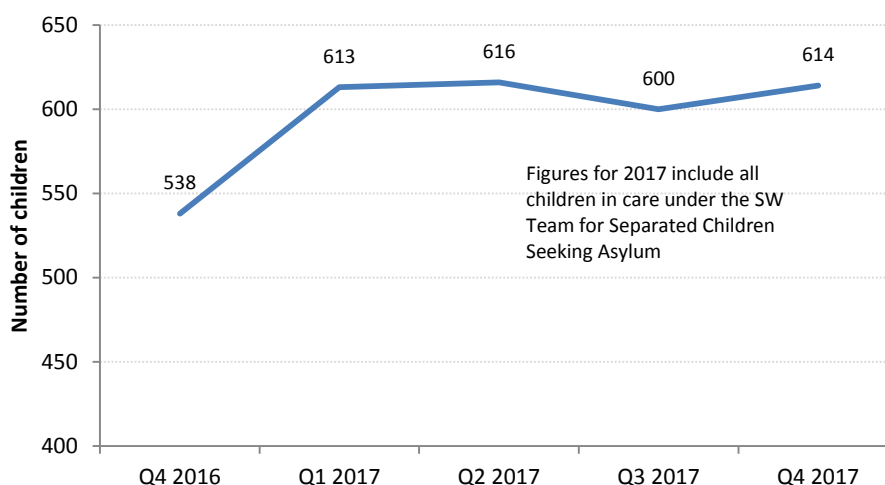
FC Gen = Foster Care General; FC Rel = Foster Care with Relatives; Res Care Gen = Residential Care General; Res Care Spec = Residential Care Special; CIC = Children in care

- 16 (0.26%) children were in out of State placements at the end of Q4 2017; no change from Q3 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 Q4 2017; no change from Q3 2017
- 146 children were in respite care (from home) at the end of Q4 2017, down 10 on Q3 2017.

3.1.3 Children in Private Placements

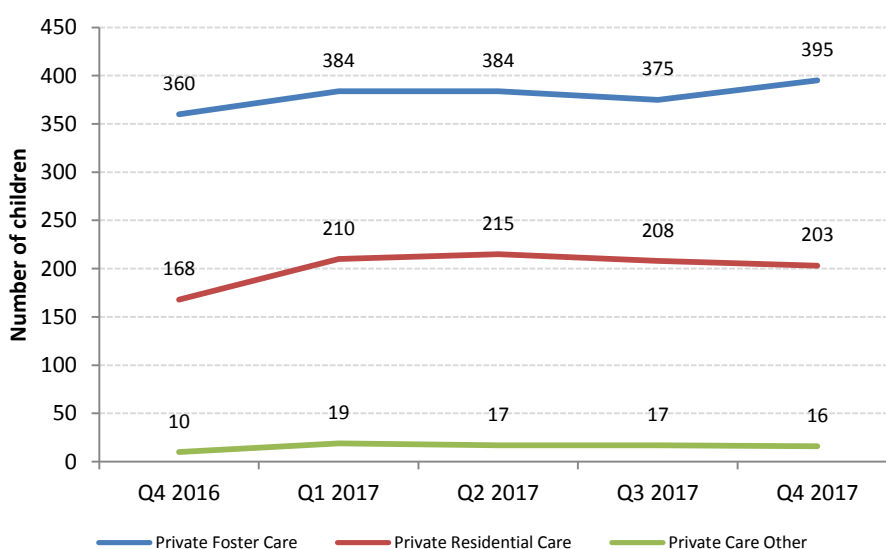
- 614 (10%) children in care at the end of Q4 2017 were in private placements¹²; 14 more than Q3 2017 (Figure 20). This figure includes 51 children in care under the SWTSCSA; six more than Q3 2017.

Figure 20: Number of children in private placements, Q4 2016 – Q4 2017



- 64% (n=395) of children in private placements were in private foster care, 20 more than Q3 and 33% (n=203) were in private residential placements, five fewer than Q3 (Figure 21).

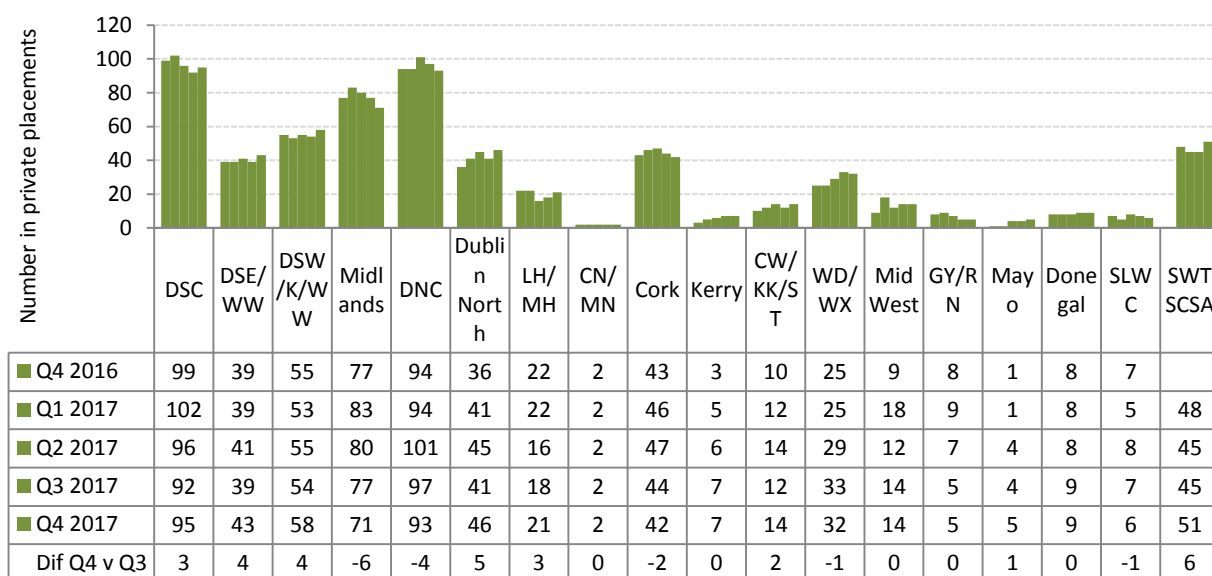
Figure 21: Number of children in private placements by care type, Q4 2016 – Q3 2017



- Dublin South Central (n=95) followed by Dublin North City (n=93) reported the highest number of children in private placements in Q4 2017. Cavan/Monaghan (n=2), Mayo (n=5) and GY/RN (n=5) reported the fewest number (Figure 22).
- Seven areas reported an increase in private placements from Q3 2017. The highest increase was reported by Dublin North (n=5). Five of the remaining 10 areas reported a decrease.
- Nine areas had more children in private placements at the end of Q4 2017 than Q4 2016. The highest increases were reported by Dublin North (n=10) and WD/WX (n=7).

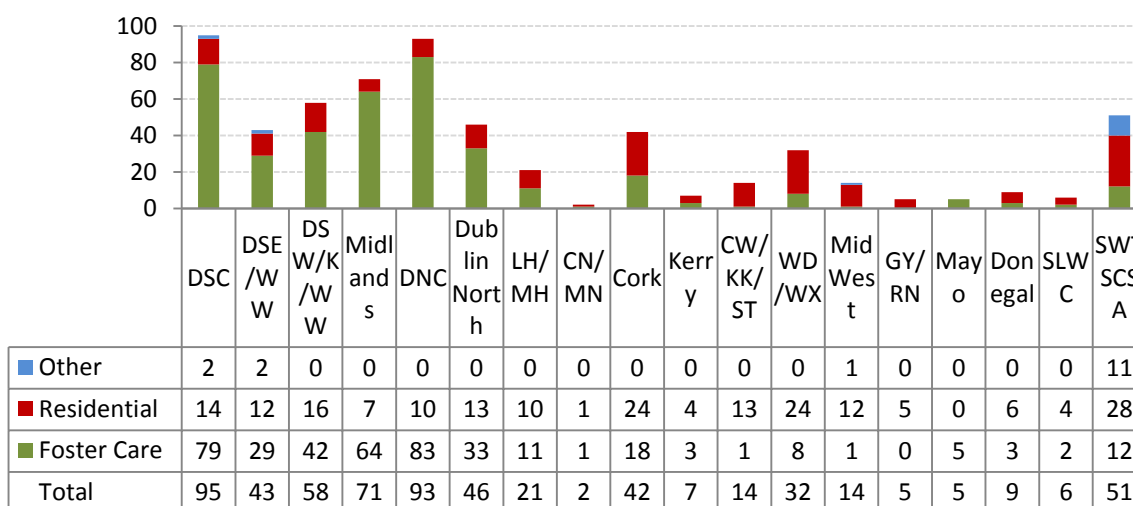
¹² The number of children in private placements is included in the children in care figures presented in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2

Figure 22: Number of children in private placements by area, Q4 2016 – Q4 2017



- Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum (n=28) followed by Cork (n=24) and Waterford/Wexford (n=24) 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=83), followed by Dublin South Central (n=79) and Midlands (n=64). More than half (57%; n=226/395) of children in private foster care placements are reported by these three areas.
- Galway/Roscommon 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 Q4 2017



3.1.4 Children in Care with an Allocated Social Worker

- 95% (n=5,897/6,189) of children in care nationally had an allocated social worker (against a target of 100%) at the end of Q4 2017; no change from Q3 2017 (Table 7).

- A total of 292 children were awaiting allocation of a social worker; 22 fewer than Q3 2017 (n=314).

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
	Q3 2017	Q3 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q4 2017	Q4 2017
Foster Care (General)	4,053	3,866	95%	4,041	3,868	96%
Foster Care (Relatives)	1,676	1,555	93%	1,661	1,547	93%
Residential Care (General)	351	347	99%	338	335	99%
Residential Special Care	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Other Placements	140	138	99%	137	135	99%
Total	6,230	5,916	95%	6,189	5,897	95%

- Eight 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 three areas reported a percentage of 96% or higher. Three areas reported a percentage less than 90% with the poorest performing area (DSW/K/WW) reporting 86% (Table 8).
- Seven areas reported an increase in percentage performance from Q3 2017; the most notable being CN/MN, up six percentage points to 90%.
- The area with the highest number of children awaiting an allocated social worker is Midwest (n=63) followed by DSW/K/WW (n=60) and Midlands (n=48).

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

Area	No in Care Q3 2017	No with an allocated SW Q3 2017	% with an allocated SW Q3 2017	No in Care Q4 2017	No with an allocated SW Q4 2017	% with an allocated SW Q4 2017	+/- Q4 v Q3 2017
DSE/WW	279	278	100%	283	283	100%	0%
Dublin North	322	312	97%	331	331	100%	3%
Kerry	155	155	100%	151	151	100%	0%
GY/RN	415	411	99%	417	417	100%	1%
Mayo	134	134	100%	130	130	100%	0%
Donegal	204	204	100%	200	200	100%	0%
SLWC	101	101	100%	108	108	100%	0%
SWTSCSA	75	75	100%	80	80	100%	0%
DSC	379	378	100%	374	373	100%	0%
Cork	824	788	96%	805	788	98%	2%
DNC	586	567	97%	566	548	97%	0%
WD/WX	408	408	100%	413	398	96%	-4%
CW/KK/ST	362	327	90%	372	347	93%	3%
LH/MH	397	371	93%	398	369	93%	-1%
CN/MN	156	131	84%	157	141	90%	6%
Mid West	603	536	89%	596	533	89%	1%
Midlands	395	342	87%	388	340	88%	1%

DSW/K/WW	435	398	91%	420	360	86%	-6%
Total	6,230	5,916	95%	6,189	5,897	95%	0%

3.1.5 Children in Care with a Care Plan

- 92% (n=5,699/6,189) of children in care had an up-to-date care plan; down one percentage points from Q3 2017 (Table 9).
- A total of 490 children did not have an up-to-date care plan, 62 more than Q3 2017 (n=428).

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
	Q3 2017	Q3 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q4 2017	Q4 2017
Foster Care General	4,053	3,785	93%	4,041	3,748	93%
Foster Care (Relatives)	1,676	1,534	92%	1,661	1,484	89%
Residential Care General	351	340	97%	338	326	100%
Residential Special Care	10	10	100%	12	12	100%
Other Placements	140	133	95%	137	129	94%
National	6,230	5,802	93%	6,189	5,699	92%

- 12 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).
- Three areas reported an increased percentage from Q3 2017, the most notable being that for CN/MN up five percentage points from 86% to 91%. The most notable decreases were reported by SLWC, down 13 percentage points to 65% and Dublin North down six percentage points to 70%.
- DSW/K/WW and Dublin North have the highest number of children with no up to date care plan at 112 and 98 respectively. SLWC is the poorest performing area in terms of percentage with 35% (n=38) of children without an 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 Q3 2017	No with a care plan Q3 2017	% with a care plan Q3 2017	No in Care Q4 2017	No with a care plan Q4 2017	% with a care plan Q4 2017	+/- Q4 v Q3 2017
WD/WX	408	408	100%	413	413	100%	0%
Mid West	603	603	100%	596	596	100%	0%
GY/RN	415	415	100%	417	417	100%	0%
Mayo	134	134	100%	130	130	100%	0%
SWTSCSA	75	75	100%	80	80	100%	0%

DNC	586	566	97%	566	549	97%	0%
LH/MH	397	383	96%	398	384	96%	0%
CW/KK/ST	362	358	99%	372	358	96%	-3%
DSE/WW	279	267	96%	283	271	96%	0%
Cork	824	782	95%	805	763	95%	0%
Kerry	155	146	94%	151	143	95%	1%
Donegal	204	201	99%	200	185	93%	-6%
CN/MN	156	134	86%	157	143	91%	5%
Midlands	395	342	87%	388	340	88%	1%
DSC	379	335	88%	374	316	84%	-4%
DSW/K/WW	435	327	75%	420	308	73%	-2%
Dublin North	322	247	77%	331	233	70%	-6%
SLWC	101	79	78%	108	70	65%	-13%
Total	6,230	5,802	93%	6,189	5,699	92%	-1%

3.1.6 Children in Care in Education

- 98% (n=3,854/3,929) of children in care aged 6 to 15 years (inclusive) were in full time education at the end of Q4 2017, down 0.2 percentage points from Q3 (Table 11). *Note: figures do not include children in care under the care of Tusla's Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum.*
- Five areas reported 100% with only two areas (Dublin North and CW/KK/ST) reporting less than 95% of children in care aged 6 to 15 years (inclusive) in full time education.
- 94% (n=960/1,026) of children in care aged 16 and 17 years were in full time education at the end of Q4 2017; up 0.5 percentage points on Q3 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.*
- Fourteen areas reported 90% or higher with three areas (CN/MN, Kerry and Mayo) reporting 100%. The lowest rate was reported by CW/KK/ST (82%) followed by Dublin South Central (84%).

Table 11: Children in care, 6 -15 years, in full time education, Q3 2017 – Q4 2017

Area	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	No of CIC 6-15 years Q4 2017	No of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q4 2017	% of CIC 6-15 years in FT education Q4 2017	+/- Q4 v Q3 2017
DSC	246	238	96.7%	248	239	96.4%	-0.3%
DSE/WW	179	179	100.0%	187	185	98.9%	-1.1%
DSW/K/WW	272	254	93.4%	269	264	98.1%	4.7%
Midlands	238	237	99.6%	219	216	98.6%	-1.0%
DNC	369	356	96.5%	360	346	96.1%	-0.4%
Dublin North	198	195	98.5%	203	185	91.1%	-7.4%
LH/MH	240	239	99.6%	251	250	99.6%	0.0%
CN/MN	102	101	99.0%	99	98	99.0%	0.0%

Cork	533	526	98.7%	528	528	100.0%	1.3%
Kerry	107	105	98.1%	106	106	100.0%	1.9%
CW/KK/ST	216	216	100.0%	204	191	93.6%	-6.4%
WD/WX	273	269	98.5%	281	279	99.3%	0.8%
Mid West	380	374	98.4%	410	406	99.0%	0.6%
GY/RN	255	254	99.6%	277	277	100.0%	0.4%
Mayo	80	80	100.0%	82	82	100.0%	0.0%
Donegal	144	144	100.0%	137	134	97.8%	-2.2%
SLWC	67	66	98.5%	68	68	100.0%	1.5%
National	3,899	3,833	98.3%	3,929	3,854	98.1%	-0.2%

Table 12: Children in care, 16 and 17 years, in full time education, Q3 2017 – Q4 2017

Area	No of CIC 16-17 yrs Q3 2017	No of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q3 2017	% of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q3 2017	No of CIC 16-17 yrs Q4 2017	No of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q4 2017	% of CIC 16-17 years in FT education Q4 2017	+/- Q4 v Q3 2017
DSC	60	48	80.0%	61	51	83.6%	3.6%
DSE/WW	47	44	93.6%	45	42	93.3%	-0.3%
DSW/KWW	86	75	87.2%	77	70	90.9%	3.7%
Midlands	58	55	94.8%	53	50	94.3%	-0.5%
DNC	124	116	93.5%	123	115	93.5%	0.0%
Dublin North	58	53	91.4%	64	60	93.8%	2.4%
LH/MH	79	71	89.9%	74	68	91.9%	2.0%
CN/MN	22	22	100.0%	23	23	100.0%	0.0%
Cork	141	133	94.3%	136	131	96.3%	2.0%
Kerry	25	24	96.0%	21	21	100.0%	4.0%
CW/KK/ST	61	61	100.0%	62	51	82.3%	-17.7%
WD/WX	56	53	94.6%	59	57	96.6%	2.0%
Mid West	92	86	93.5%	92	90	97.8%	4.3%
GY/RN	67	67	100.0%	69	68	98.6%	-1.4%
Mayo	25	25	100.0%	21	21	100.0%	0.0%
Donegal	22	19	86.4%	27	24	88.9%	2.5%
SLWC	16	15	93.8%	19	18	94.7%	0.9%
National	1,039	967	93.1%	1,026	960	93.6%	0.5%

3.2 AFTERCARE

KEY FACTS

- 2,037 young adults (all ages) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q4 2017; highest number for the period Q4 2016 – Q4 2017
- 85% (n=1,674/1,963) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an allocated aftercare worker; down one percentage point on Q3
- 87% (n=1,709/1,963) of young adults 18-22 in receipt of aftercare services had an aftercare plan; up three percentage points on Q3
- 172 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years; 560 discharged 2017
- 76% (n=130) of those discharged in Q4 had an allocated aftercare worker

3.2.1 Young adults in receipt of aftercare services

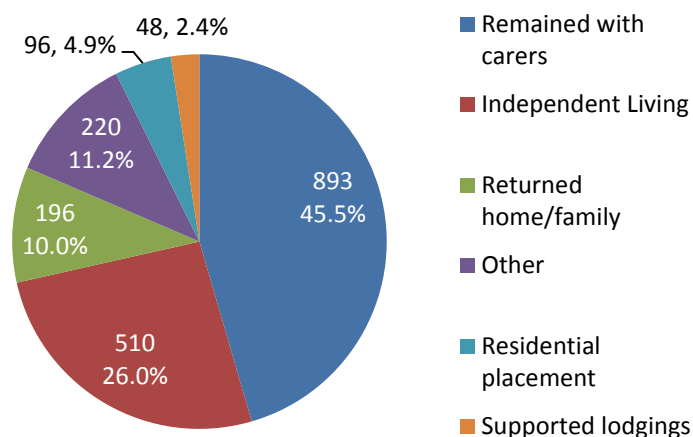
- 2,037 young adults (all ages i.e., 18 years and upwards and inclusive of those 25 or older) in receipt of aftercare services at the end of Q4 2017; 48 more than Q3 2017 and 157 more than Q4 2016 (Table 13)
- 1,963 (96%) young adults in receipt of aftercare services were aged 18-22 years (inclusive)
- 1,128 (57%) of this cohort (18-22 years) were in full-time education (Table 13)
- 1,493 (76%) of the 18-22 years cohort were 18-20 years
- 901 (60%) of those 18-20 years were in full-time education

Table 13: Young adults in receipt of aftercare services and in fulltime education Q4 2016 – Q4 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
Q4 2017	2,037	1,963	1,128 (57%)	1,493	901 (60%)
Q3 2017	1,989	1,914	1,145 (60%)	1,409	869 (62%)
Q2 2017	1,996	1,902	1,116 (59%)	1,481	887 (60%)
Q1 2017	1,940	1,853	1,107 (60%)	1,475	875 (59%)
Q4 2016	1,880	1,806	1,040 (58%)	1,389	803 (58%)

- In terms of living arrangements, 45% (n=893) of the 18-22 year olds remained with their carers, 10% (n=196) returned home, 26% (n=510) were in independent living arrangements and 5% (n=96) were in a residential placement (Figure 24).

Figure 24: Living arrangements of young adults (18-22 years) in receipt of aftercare services, Q4 2017



- 85% (n=1,674) of the 18-22 years in receipt of aftercare had an allocated aftercare worker at the end of Q4 2017; down one percentage points on Q3.
- Eight areas reported 100% with a further three areas reporting 90% or higher. The lowest percentage was reported by Dublin South Central (50%; 68/136) followed by DSW/K/WW (54%; n=95/175) and CW/KK/ST (55%; 69/125) (Table 14).
- Five areas reported an increased percentage from Q3 2017; highest increase reported by LH/MH, up from 77% to 100%.

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 Q3 2017	No with an allocated worker Q3 2017	% with an allocated worker Q3 2017	No 18-22 years in aftercare Q4 2017	No with an allocated worker Q4 2017	% with an allocated worker Q4 2017	Δ (+/-) Q4 2017 v Q3 2017
DSC	109	45	41%	136	68	50%	+9%
DSE/WW	109	104	95%	109	104	95%	0%
DSW/K/WW	162	89	55%	175	95	54%	-1%
Midlands	117	117	100%	114	114	100%	0%
DNC	159	127	80%	188	127	68%	-12%
Dublin North	86	86	100%	90	89	99%	-1%
LH/MH	155	120	77%	121	121	100%	23%
CN/MN	70	70	100%	72	72	100%	0%
Cork	239	226	95%	234	228	97%	2%
Kerry	38	38	100%	43	36	84%	-16%
CW/KK/ST	124	75	60%	125	69	55%	-5%
WD/WX	137	135	99%	138	138	100%	1%
Mid West	162	162	100%	170	170	100%	0%
GY/RN	136	135	99%	134	134	100%	1%
Mayo	31	29	94%	36	31	86%	-8%

Donegal	48	48	100%	44	44	100%	0%
SLWC	32	32	100%	34	34	100%	0%
Total	1,914	1,638	86%	1,963	1,674	85%	-1%

- 87% (n= 1,709) of the same cohort had an aftercare plan at the end of Q4 2017; up three percentage points on Q3.
- Five areas reported 100% with a further six areas reporting 90% or higher. The lowest percentage was reported by Dublin South Central (39%; 53/136) followed by DSW/K/WW (47%; 82/175) and CW/KK/ST (76%; 95/125) although up 18 percentage points on Q3 (Table 15).
- Seven areas reported an increased percentage from Q3 2017; highest increase reported by LH/MH, up from 77% to 100%.

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

Area	No 18-22 years in aftercare Q3 2017	No with an aftercare plan Q3 2017	% with an aftercare plan Q3 2017	No 18-22 years in aftercare Q4 2017	No with an aftercare plan Q4 2017	% with an aftercare plan Q4 2017	Δ (+/-) Q4 v Q3
DSC	109	53	49%	136	53	39%	-10%
DSE/WW	109	100	92%	109	107	98%	6%
DSW/K/WW	162	62	38%	175	82	47%	9%
Midlands	117	117	100%	114	113	99%	-1%
DNC	159	148	93%	188	188	100%	7%
Dublin North	86	80	93%	90	80	89%	-4%
LH/MH	155	120	77%	121	121	100%	23%
CN/MN	70	70	100%	72	72	100%	0%
Cork	239	236	99%	234	231	99%	0%
Kerry	38	38	100%	43	40	93%	-7%
CW/KK/ST	124	72	58%	125	95	76%	18%
WD/WX	137	135	99%	138	138	100%	1%
Mid West	162	158	98%	170	167	98%	0%
GY/RN	136	111	82%	134	114	85%	3%
Mayo	31	28	90%	36	31	86%	-4%
Donegal	48	48	100%	44	43	98%	-2%
SLWC	32	32	100%	34	34	100%	0%
Total	1,914	1,608	84%	1,963	1,709	87%	+3%

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

- 172 young adults were discharged from care by reason of reaching 18 years during Q4 2017; (Table 16). This brings to 560 the number discharged for 2017
- 99% (n=170/172) were eligible for an aftercare service and of these 95% (n=162/170) were availing of the service.

- 76% (n=130) of those discharged had an allocated aftercare worker. Thirteen areas reported 100%. The lowest percentage was reported by Dublin South Central with none of those discharged (n=5) with an allocated worker followed by DSW/K/WW (35%; 6/17) and Dublin North City (50%; 24/48).

Table 16: Number discharged, eligible for aftercare service and allocated aftercare worker, Q3 2017 – Q4 2017

Area	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	No discharged Q4 2017	No discharged eligible for aftercare Q4 2017	No availing of an aftercare service Q4 2017	No with allocated aftercare worker Q4 2017	% with allocated aftercare worker Q4 2017
DSC	12	12	9	3	25%	5	5	5	0	0%
DSE/WW	6	6	6	6	100%	5	5	5	5	100%
DSW/K/WW	14	14	8	10	71%	17	17	10	6	35%
Midlands	4	4	4	4	100%	9	9	9	9	100%
DNC	13	13	8	8	62%	48	48	48	24	50%
Dublin North	6	6	6	6	100%	5	5	5	5	100%
LH/MH	6	6	6	6	100%	10	10	10	10	100%
CN/MN	5	5	5	5	100%	1	1	1	1	100%
Cork	23	23	23	20	87%	24	24	24	24	100%
Kerry	2	2	2	2	100%	7	7	7	7	100%
CW/KK/ST	8	8	8	7	88%	8	8	7	8	100%
WD/WX	11	11	11	11	100%	5	5	5	5	100%
Mid West	12	12	11	11	92%	12	10	10	10	83%
GY/RN	27	27	27	27	100%	9	9	9	9	100%
Mayo	1	1	1	1	100%	5	5	5	5	100%
Donegal	3	3	3	3	100%	1	1	1	1	100%
SLWC	4	4	4	4	100%	1	1	1	1	100%
Total	157	157	142	134	85%	167	165	157	130	82%

3.3 ADOPTION SERVICES

KEY FACTS

- 167 new applications to commence tracing for a searched person in Q4 2017; 922 received in 2017
- 729 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q4 2017; down 99 (12%) on Q3. Fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017.
- All but one service meeting the target of eight weeks or less from time of application to provision of non-identifying information
- 52 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received in Q4 2017; 190 received in 2017
- 35 new children were referred for adoption in Q4 2017; 177 referred in 2017
- 43 completed adoption assessments presented to Local Adoption Committees in Q4 2017 ; 152 presented in 2017

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.

- 228 new enquiries regarding information and tracing received in Q4 2017 bringing the total number of enquiries for 2017 to 1,495.
- 167 new applications to commence tracing of a searched person received in Q4 2017 bringing the total number of new applications for 2017 to 922.
- 729 applicants awaiting an information and tracing service at the end of Q4 2017; down 99 (12%) on Q3 2017 and the fewest number for the period Q1 2017 – Q4 2017 (Table 17).
- Highest number of applicants (n=335; 46%) were awaiting a service in the Cork/Kerry area. This is due to the majority of files being held in this area.
- All services reported a decrease from Q3 2017 in the number of applicants awaiting.

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

Service Area	No waiting Q4 2016	No waiting Q1 2017	No waiting Q2 2017	No waiting Q3 2017	No waiting Q4 2017	Δ (+/-) Q4 v Q3
Dublin Mid Leinster Dublin North East <i>These two services are combined for applications waiting</i>	221	277	216	247	237	-10
Cork/Kerry	304	335	351	350	335	-15
CW/KK/ST/WD/WX	62	63	60	70	46	-24
Midwest	14	23	26	40	24	-16
Galway/Roscommon	33	44	37	53	38	-15
Mayo	7	0	4	3	2	-1
Donegal/SLWC	49	63	60	65	47	-18
National	690	805	754	828	729	-99

- At the end of Q4 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). The waiting time in this area (although 16 weeks) is down 4 weeks on Q3 2017. 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) Q4 2016	Length of Time (weeks) Q1 2017	Length of Time (weeks) Q2 2017	Length of Time (weeks) Q3 2017	Length of Time (weeks) Q4 2017
Dublin Mid Leinster	10	7	7	7	7
Dublin North East	4	4	4	8	4
Cork/Kerry	4	6	6	8	8
CW/KK/ST/WD/WX	6	6	6	6	6
Midwest	8	8	8	8	8
Galway/Roscommon	8	6	6	6	6
Mayo	1	1	1	1	1
Donegal/SLWC	8	8	6	20	16

- At the end of Q4 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). Five 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 9 months against a target of 6 months or less. All services but two services (Dublin North East and the MidWest) 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 30 months against a target of 12 months or less. All but two services (Dublin North East and Cork/Kerry) 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	4	8	23
Cork/Kerry	12	6 weeks	30
CW/KK/ST/WD/WX	3	3	12
Midwest	3	9	12
Galway/Roscommon	1	3	6
Mayo	1	1	4
Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan	4	6	12

3.3.2 Adoption Assessments

- 52 receipted completed applications for adoption (all types) received during Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 190 (Table 20). Almost half (48%; 92) were for inter-country adoption followed by step-parent adoption accounting for almost a further quarter (23%; 43).

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

Area	# Q1 2017	# Q2 2017	# Q3 2017	# Q4 2017	Total (YTD)
Fostering to Adoption	5	4	9	9	27
Inter-Country Adoption	22	25	18	27	92
Domestic Adoption	10	9	5	4	28
Step-parent adoption	10	12	9	12	43
Total	47	50	41	52	190

- 35 new children were referred for adoption in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 177 (Table 21). The highest number (n=79; 45%) were for step-parent adoption, followed closely by fostering to adoption (n=76; 43%).

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

Area	# Q1 2017	# Q2 2017	# Q3 2017	# Q4 2017	Total (YTD)
Fostering to Adoption	14	8	34	20	76
Domestic Adoption	12	5	3	2	22
Step-parent adoption	23	31	12	13	79
Total	49	44	49	35	177

- 43 completed assessments (all types) were presented to Local Adoption Committees during Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 152 (Table 22). The highest number of assessments were for inter-country adoption (n=71; 47%) followed by step-parent adoption (n=42; 28%).

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

Area	# Q1 2017	# Q2 2017	# Q3 2017	# Q4 2017	Total (YTD)
Fostering to Adoption	3	8	2	6	19
Inter-Country Adoption	13	22	17	19	71
Domestic Adoption	7	3	3	7	20
Step-parent adoption	9	10	12	11	42
Total	32	43	34	43	152

3.4 FOSTER CARERS

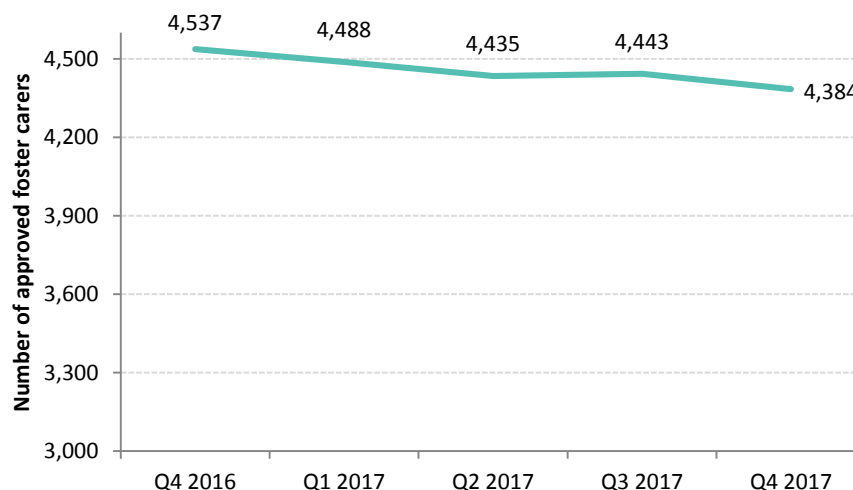
KEY FACTS

- 4,384 foster carers on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q4 2017; 59 fewer than Q3 2017 and 153 fewer than Q4 2016
- 80% (n=(1,152/1,443) of relative foster carers approved against a target of 80%
- 93% (n=2,551) of general foster carers had an allocated link (target 90%). A total of 205 awaiting; down 30 on Q3
- 87% (n=1,003) of approved relative foster carers had an allocated link worker (target of 85%), Total of 149 awaiting allocation; up 12 on Q3
- 291 unapproved relative foster carer; down 11 on Q3
- 251 (86%) of the unapproved relative foster carers had a child placed with them for longer than 12 week
- 88% (n=221) of unapproved relative foster carers with a child placed > 12 weeks had an allocated link (social) worker; up eight percentage points on Q3. Total of 30 carers awaiting in three areas (Cork (23), DSW/K/WW (5) and MidWest (2)).

3.4.1 Number of foster carers

- 4,384 foster carers (all types minus Brussels II Regulation) on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of Q4 2017; 59 fewer than Q3 2017 and 153 fewer than Q4 2016 (Figure 25). There were 291 unapproved relative foster carers; 11 fewer than Q3 2017 and 65 fewer than Q4 2016. Eighty percent (n=1,152/1,443) of relative foster carers are approved against a target of 80%.

Figure 25: Number of approved foster carers (all types minus Brussels II Regulation) Q4 2016 – Q4 2017



- 63% (n=2,756) of all approved foster carers are general foster carers. Relative foster carers (approved) account for a further 26% (n=1,152) while private foster carers account for the remaining 11% (n=476) (Table 23).

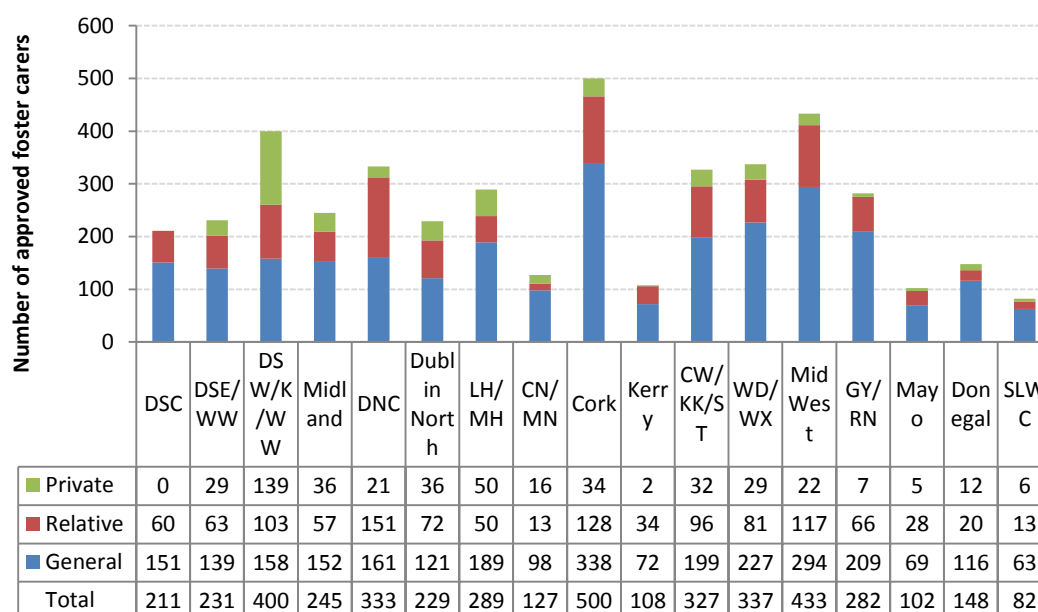
Table 23: Breakdown of foster carers by type Q4 2016 – Q4 2017

						$\Delta (+/-)$
Foster Carers	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q4 v Q3 2017
General (Approved)	2,913	2,879	2,807	2,806	2,756	-50
Relative (Approved)	1,221	1,196	1,179	1,171	1,152	-19
Private (Approved)	403	413	449	466	476	+10
Total Approved	4,537	4,488	4,435	4,443	4,384	-59
Relative (Unapproved)	356	328	311	302	291	-11

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 500 in Cork to 82 in Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan at the end of Q4 2017 (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Foster carers approved by type and area on the panel of approved foster carers, Q4 2017



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

- Seven areas reported an increase from Q4 2017 in the number of foster carers approved and on the panel. The highest increase was reported by Donegal (n=5) (Table 24).
- Nine reported a decrease from Q3 2017. The highest decrease was reported by Cork (n=27) followed by CW/KK/ST (n=25).

Table 24: Area breakdown of approved foster carers (all types), Q4 2016 – Q4 2017

Area	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Δ (+/-) Q4 v Q3 2017
DSC	224	214	202	213	211	-2
DSE/WW	232	227	226	231	231	0
DSW/K/WW	396	401	397	397	400	3
Midland	243	245	249	252	245	-7
DNC	347	341	342	332	333	+1
Dublin North	240	225	226	226	229	3
LH/MH	256	252	273	286	289	3
CN/MN	139	132	132	130	127	-3
Cork	544	546	518	527	500	-27
Kerry	114	114	111	105	108	3
CW/KK/ST	371	372	371	352	327	-25
WD/WX	370	348	342	344	337	-7
MidWest	419	420	427	434	433	-1
GY/RN	317	321	287	288	282	-6
Mayo	95	97	99	99	102	3
Donegal	149	150	149	143	148	5
SLWC	81	83	84	84	82	-2
National	4,537	4,488	4,435	4,443	4,384	-59

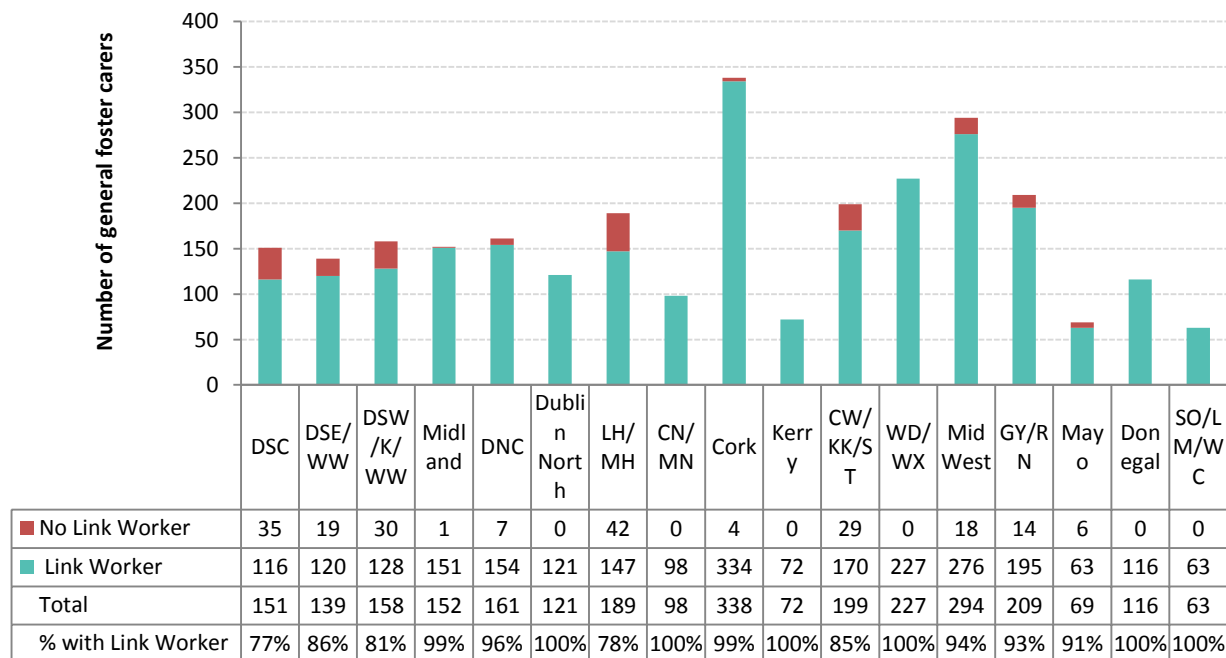
*Figures revised since publication of the Q2 2016 Integrated performance and Activity Report

- 93% (n=2,551) of general foster carers approved and on the Panel had an allocated link (social) worker against a target of 90% at the end of Q4 2017; up one percentage point on Q3. A total of 205 carers were awaiting an allocated worker; 30 fewer than Q3 2017. Twelve areas reported a percentage of 90% or higher with six of these areas reporting 100% (Table 25).
- LH/MH reported the highest number (n=42, up 30 on Q3 2017) of foster carers awaiting a link working followed by Dublin South Central (n=35, down seven on Q3); DSW/K/WW (n=30, down 14 on Q3) and CW/KK/ST (n=29, down two on Q3).
- Seven areas reported a decrease in carers awaiting an allocated link worker from Q3; the highest decrease was reported by Mayo (down 20 to six) followed by DSW/K/WW (down 14 to 30).
- Three areas reported an increase from Q3 2017; the highest increase was reported by LH/MH (up 30 to 42) followed by GY/RN (up 14).

Table 25: General foster carers (approved) with/awaiting link social worker, Q3 2017 – Q4 2017

Area	With Link Worker Q3 2017	Awaiting Link Worker Q3 2017	% With Link Worker Q3 2017	With Link Worker Q4 2017	Awaiting Link Worker Q4 2017	% With Link Worker Q4 2017	Δ +/- No. Awaiting Link Worker Q4 v Q3 2017
DSC	114	42	73%	116	35	77%	-7
DSE/WW	124	18	87%	120	19	86%	1
DSW/K/WW	120	44	73%	128	30	81%	-14
Midland	151	1	99%	151	1	99%	0
DNC	144	19	88%	154	7	96%	-12
Dub North	120	0	100%	121	0	100%	0
LH/MH	176	12	94%	147	42	78%	30
CN/MN	97	0	100%	98	0	100%	0
Cork	353	4	99%	334	4	99%	0
Kerry	70	0	100%	72	0	100%	0
CW/KK/ST	176	31	85%	170	29	85%	-2
WD/WX	231	0	100%	227	0	100%	0
MidWest	265	28	90%	276	18	94%	-10
GY/RN	218	0	100%	195	14	93%	14
Mayo	44	26	63%	63	6	91%	-20
Donegal	103	10	91%	116	0	100%	-10
SO/LM/WC	65	0	100%	63	0	100%	0
National	2,571	235	92%	2,551	205	93%	-30

Figure 27: General foster carers approved and on the panel with/awaiting a link (social worker), Q4 2017



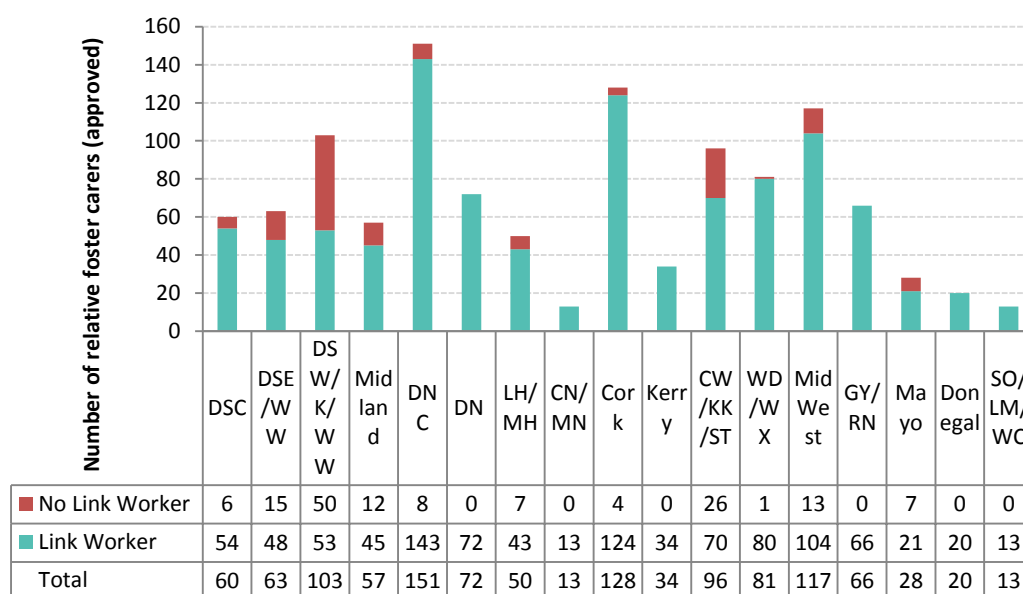
- 87% (n=1,003) of relative foster carers approved and on the panel had an allocated link (social) worker at the end of Q4 2017 against a target of 85%; down one percentage point on Q3.
- A total of 149 carers were awaiting an allocated link worker; 12 more than Q3.

- Twelve areas reported a percentage of 85% (target) or higher with six of these areas reporting 100% (Table 26).
- DSW/K/WW reported the highest number (n=50 up 17 on Q3 2017) awaiting a link worker followed by CW/KK/ST (n=26 down three on Q3 2017).
- Six areas reported a decrease in the number awaiting from Q3 2017; highest decrease reported by DNC area (n=11) followed by Mayo (n=5).
- Five areas reported an increase in the number awaiting from Q3; highest increase reported by DSW/K/WW (up 17 to 50) followed by Midlands area (up 10 to 12).

Table 26: Relative foster carers (approved) with/awaiting link social worker, Q3 2017 – Q4 2017

Area	With Link Worker Q3 2017	Awaiting Link Worker Q3 2017	% With Link Worker Q3 2017	With Link Worker Q4 2017	Awaiting Link Worker Q4 2017	% With Link Worker Q4 2017	Δ +/- Number Awaiting Link Worker Q4 v Q3 2017
DSC	47	10	82%	54	6	90%	-4
DSE/WW	53	7	88%	48	15	76%	8
DSW/K/WW	62	33	65%	53	50	51%	17
Midland	63	2	97%	45	12	79%	10
DNC	130	19	87%	143	8	95%	-11
Dublin North	70	0	100%	72	0	100%	0
LH/MH	47	4	92%	43	7	86%	3
CN/MN	18	0	100%	13	0	100%	0
Cork	130	7	95%	124	4	97%	-3
Kerry	33	0	100%	34	0	100%	0
CW/KK/ST	84	29	74%	70	26	73%	-3
WD/WX	85	0	100%	80	1	99%	1
MidWest	106	14	88%	104	13	89%	-1
GY/RN	62	0	100%	66	0	100%	0
Mayo	12	12	50%	21	7	75%	-5
Donegal	19	0	100%	20	0	100%	0
SO/LM/WC	13	0	100%	13	0	100%	0
National	1,034	137	88%	1,003	149	87%	12

Figure 28: Relative foster carers approved and on the panel with/awaiting allocated link Q4 2017



3.4.3 Foster carers (relative) unapproved

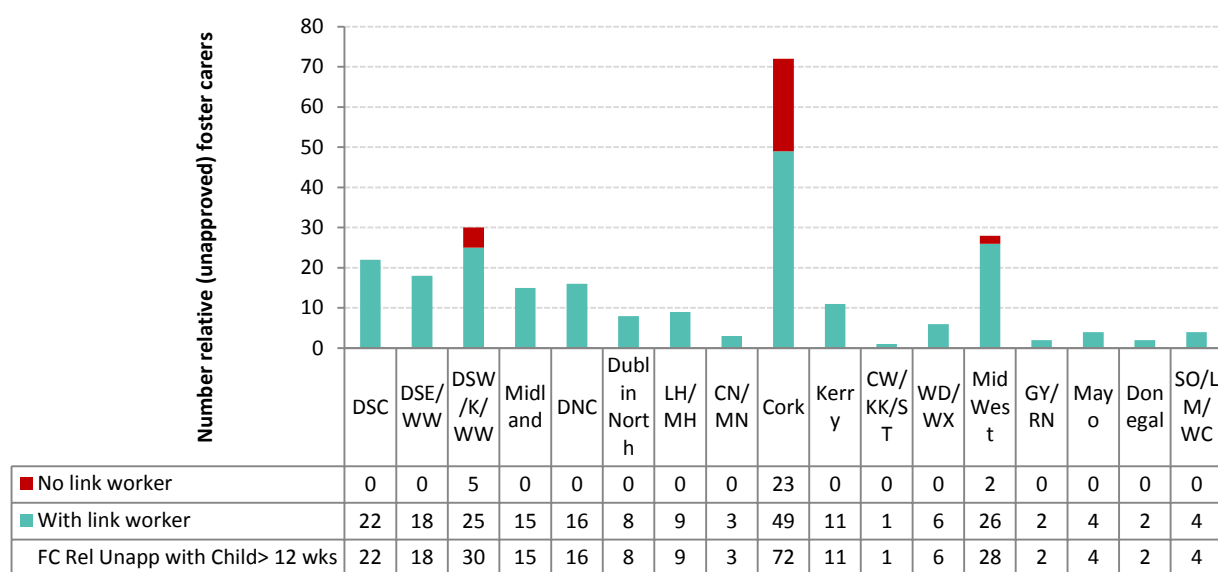
- 291 relative foster carers unapproved at the end of Q4 2017; 11 fewer than Q3 and 65 fewer than Q4 2016 (Table 27)
- Of these 251 (86%) had a child placed with them for longer than 12 week; seven fewer than Q3 2017
- Of the 251 foster carers who had a child placed with them for >12 weeks, 88% (n=1221) had an allocated link (social) worker at the end of Q4 2017; up eight percentage points in on Q3.
- A total of 30 carers were awaiting allocation of a link worker; 23 in Cork, five in Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow and two in the MidWest (Fig 29). The number waiting in Cork is down 19 on Q3.

Table 27: Breakdown of foster carers not approved, Q4 2016 – Q4 2017

Unapproved Relative Foster Carers	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Δ (+/-) Q4 v Q3 2017
No. unapproved	356	328	311	302	291	-11
No (%) with a child > 12 weeks	308 87%	276 84%	271 87%	258 (85%)	251 (86%)	-7
Child > 12 weeks and have a Link Worker	211 69%	193 70%	203* 75%	207 80%	221 (88%)	+14
Child > 12 weeks AWAITING Link Worker	97	83	68*	51	30	-21

*Figure amended from previous report (Q2 2017) published

Figure 29: Relative foster carers UNAPPROVED with a child > 12 weeks, with/awaiting a link worker, Q4 2017



3.5 HIQA INSPECTIONS

FOSTER CARE

The Health Information and Quality Authority (Hiqa) published two inspection reports in Q4 2017. The summary of judgments is set out in Table 28 and a summary of main findings can be found in Appendix II.

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
CW/K/ST	8 (Themed)	1	3	4	0
Cork	Follow-up / focussed	-	-	4	-

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Hiqa published four inspection reports in Q4 2017; two of which were for special care units. The summary of judgments is set out in Table 29 and a summary of main findings for each centre inspected can be found in Appendix II.

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 0004186	10 (Unannounced/Full)	1	1	4	4
OSV 0004184	7 (Unannounced/Full)	0	0	0	7

Centre Inspected	Summary of Judgments				
	No of Standards Assessed	Compliant	Substantially Compliant	Non Compliant - Major	Non Compliant - Moderate
Gleann Alainn	30 (Unannounced/Full)	10	6	1	13
Coovagh House	30 (Unannounced/Full)	7	2	6	15

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

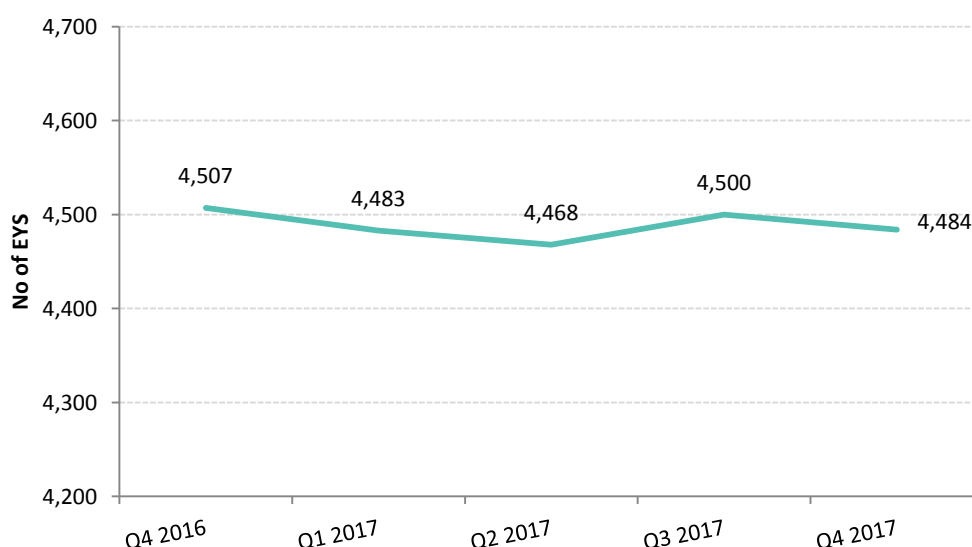
KEY FACTS

- 4,484 EYS on the register nationally at the end of Q4 2017; 16 fewer than Q3 2017 and 23 fewer than Q4 2016
- 632 EYS inspections (all types) carried out during Q4 2017; 82 (15%) more than Q3 2017, bringing the total number of inspections for 2017 to 2,033.
- 55 complaints received in respect of EYS during Q4 2017 bringing the total number of 2017 to 295
- 63 incidents notified to the Inspectorate in Q4 2017 bringing the total number for 2017 to 203

4.1.1 Activity Data

- 4,484 early years services (EYS) on the register nationally at the end of Q4 2017; 16 fewer than Q3 2017 and 23 fewer than Q4 2016.

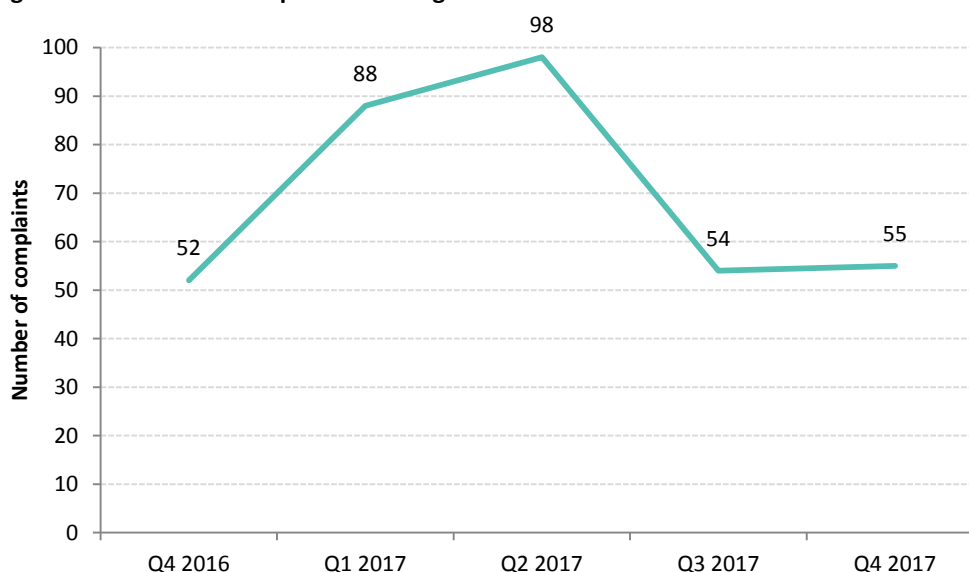
Figure 30: Number of Early Years Services on the Early Years Inspectorate Register



- Nine new applications to become a registered provider received by the Inspectorate in Q4 2017, 24 fewer than Q3 2017. This brings to 89 the total number received in 2017.

- 17 new applications approved by the Inspectorate in Q4 2017; 47 fewer than Q3 2017. This brings to 96 the total number approved in 2017.
- 245 “change in circumstances” requests received by the Inspectorate in Q4 2017; 156 fewer than Q3 2017 (revised figure). This brings to 1,422 the total number received in 2017.
- 34 services were found to have closed in Q4 2017, bringing the total number for 2017 to 117.
- 632 inspections (all types¹³) carried out in Q4 2017; 82 (15%) more than Q3 2017. This brings to 2,033 the total number of inspections carried in 2017.
- 55 complaints relating to EYS received by the Inspectorate during Q4 2017; one more than Q3 2017. This brings to 295 the number of complaints for 2017.

Figure 31: Number of complaints relating to EYS received



- 63 incidents notified to the Inspectorate in Q4 2017, 35 more than Q3 2017. This brings to 203 the number of incidents notified in 2017.
- No service de-registered by Tusla in 2017.
- No prosecutions of EYS taken by Tusla during 2017.

¹³ Includes initial, follow up, complaints, focused inspections or fit for purpose inspections

4.2 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION REGULATION

Key Facts

Home Education

- 1,377 children on the register for home education at the end of Q4 2017; 55 more than Q4 2016
- 569 applications received for home education in 2017
- 330 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q4 2017; 189 more than Q4 2016
- 762 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q4 2017

Independent Schools

- 4,904 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q4 2017
- 1,330 new children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,637
- 1,166 children registered during 2017
- 955 children awaiting registration at the end of Q4 2017

Under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare)¹⁴ Act 2000

Home Education

- 1,377 children on the register for home education at the end of Q4 2017; 23 fewer than Q3 2017 (1,400) but 55 more than Q4 2016 (1,322)
- 16% (n=218) of children on the register have special educational needs
- 156 applications received for home education during Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 569. Almost one in four (24%; 137/569) applications were for children with special educational needs
- 152 assessments (all types) for home education carried out in Q4 2017; 38 more than Q3 and bringing the total for 2017 to 564
- 49 children registered for home education¹⁵ in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 295

¹⁴ 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—...

¹⁵ 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

- 330 children awaiting assessment for registration at the end of Q4 2017; 94 more than Q3 2017 and 189 more than Q4 2016 (n=141). Of these 317 are awaiting a preliminary¹⁶ assessment and 13 are awaiting a comprehensive assessment.
- 762 registered children awaiting a review at the end of Q4 2017; 17 more than Q3 2017
- Two children were refused registration for home education in Q4 2017 bringing the total number refused for 2017 to 16. There were two appeals made in 2017 against decisions not to register.
- 72 children removed from the register in Q4 2017 bringing the total number for 2017 to 240. Breakdown of the 240 is as follows: 96 (40%) turned 18 years; 111 (46%) returned to school; 18 (8%) left Ireland; 11 were referred to Educational Welfare Services¹⁷; 3 were Deregistered and 1 Other reason.

Independent Schools

- 4,904 children attending 43 assessed schools at the end of Q4 2017; 79 more than Q3 2017
- 1,330 new children's applications for education in independent schools received in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,637.
- 88 children registered¹⁸ during Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 1,166
- No children refused registration in 2017
- 955 children awaiting registration at the end of Q4 2017, 19 more than Q3 2017 – *due to issues relating to internal capacity or where information is awaited from the parents e.g., birth certs, signed application form*
- 198 children removed from the register during Q4 2017 bringing the total number for 2017 to 1,025 – *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 Q4 2017.

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

¹⁷ Children who cannot be located are referred to Educational Welfare Services

¹⁸ 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

- 117 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q4 2017
- 26 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 96
- 6 non statutory foster care services at the end of Q4 2017

Non Statutory Children's Residential Centres

- 117 non-statutory residential centres at the end of Q4 2017
- 30 inspections (all types and onsite) conducted in Q4 2017 bringing the total for 2017 to 100.

Table 30: Inspections of Non Statutory Residential Services

Inspections by Type	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Total
Thematic Inspection (announced)	14	19	9	11	53
Thematic Inspection (unannounced)	8	3	5	11	27
Lead Inspector Agency Visit	0	3	2	0	5
New Registration Inspection Visit	0	4	3	4	11
Total	22	29	19	26	96

Non Statutory Foster Care Services

- 6 non-statutory foster care services at the end of Q4 2017.

5.0 EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES

KEY FACTS

- 933 new individual children worked with between Sept – Dec 2017
- 998 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Dec 2017
- 265 school attendance notices (SANs) issued in respect of 175 children under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000¹, between Sept – Dec 2017
- 47 summonses issued in respect of 35 children under Section 25 of the Act, between Sept – Dec 2017
- 92 Section 24 meetings convened by EWOs, in the academic 2016/2017

Referrals¹⁹

Academic Year 2017 / 2018

- 1,453 referrals screened by senior educational welfare officers between Sept and Dec 2017
- 971 referrals allocated to educational welfare officers (EWOs) between Sept and Dec 2017
- 296 referrals screened out / required no further action between Sept and Dec 2017
- 998 screened referrals on a waiting list at the end of Dec 2017; 163 fewer than August 2017

Table 31: Referrals activity by month

	Referrals Screened	Referrals Allocated	Referrals Screened Out	Screened Referrals on Waiting List (month end)
Outturn 2016/2017	5,939	3,377	1,108	1,161
Sep-17	218	177	16	960
Oct-17	372	305	64	900
Nov-17	491	315	166	819
Dec-17	372	174	50	998
Total (Sep-Dec)	1,453	971	296	998

Open Cases / Cases Worked

Academic Year 2017 / 2018 (Sept – Dec)

- 933 new individual children worked with between Sept and Dec 2017
- 1,164 new cases assigned to EWOs between Sept and Dec 2017
- 1,156 cases closed between Sept and Dec 2017

¹⁹ 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.

Table 32: Cases open, assigned and closed by month

	Open Cases on hand/brought forward	New Cases Assigned	Cases Closed
Outturn 2016/2017	3,113	4,422	3,902
Sept-17	3,113	297	300
Oct-17	3,110	318	348
Nov-17	3,080	330	313
Dec-17	3,097	219	195
Total (Sep-Dec)	-	1,164	1,156

School Attendance Notices and Summonses under Section 25

Academic Year 2017 / 2018 (Sept – Dec)

- 265 school attendance notices (SANs) issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000²⁰, Sept 2017 – Dec 2017. The notices issued were in respect of 175 individual children i.e., more than one notice was issued in respect of some children.
- 47 summonses issued by EWS under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare Act) 2000, Sept 2017 – Dec 2017. The summonses issued were in respect of 35 individual children i.e., more than one summons was issued in respect some children.
- EWOs attended 157 court cases pertaining to their own cases between Sept 2017 – Dec 2017. and an additional 22 court cases in a supporting capacity (e.g., at the request of social work services).
- 92 child protection conferences (CPC) attended by EWOs between Sept 2017 – Dec 2017.
- 92 Section 24²¹ meetings convened by EWOs between Sept 2017 – Dec 2017.
- 79 official child protection and welfare referrals made by EWOs between Sept 2017 – Dec 2017.

²⁰ 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.

²¹ 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.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

5.1 Family Support Services

5.2 Meitheal and Child & Family Support Networks

6.1 FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES²²

KEY FACTS

- At least 21,526 children in receipt of family support services at the end of December 2017
- At least 39,065 children referred to family support services in 2017
- At least 73% (28,562) of children referred to family support services in 2017 received a service

6.1.1 Family Support Providers

- At least 308 family support providers commissioned for 2017; the majority (86%; n=264) of which are external to Tusla (Table 33).
- 85% (n=261) of services provided data for Q3 – Q4 2017. Six areas reported 100%. The lowest percentage was reported by CW/KK/ST (55%; n=12/22), DSE/WW (57%; 8/14) and GY/RN (65%; n=17/26). 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, Q3 – Q4 2017

Area	# Family Support Providers Commissioned Q3-Q4 2017	# External to Tusla	# Internal to Tusla	# of services that provided data for Jul-Dec 2017	% that provided data for Jan- Jun 2017
DSC	21	19	2	21	100%
DSE/WW	14	10	4	8	57%
DSW/K/WW	15	13	2	12	80%
Midlands	11	9	2	10	91%
DNC	32	26	6	27	84%
Dublin North	21	20	1	20	95%
LH/MH	19	15	4	16	84%
CN/MN	12	7	5	12	100%
Cork	8	7	1	8	100%
Kerry	5	4	1	5	100%
CW/KK/ST	22	21	1	12	55%
WD/WX	25	22	3	20	80%
MidWest	36	36	0	33	92%
GY/RN	26	18	8	17	65%
Mayo	10	6	4	10	100%
Donegal	12	12	0	11	92%
SLWC	19	19	0	19	100%
Total	308	264	44	261	85%

²² 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.

6.1.2 Children in Receipt of Family Support Services

- At least 21,526 children in receipt of family support services at the end of December 2017. Highest number reported by MidWest (n=5,297; accounts for 25% of children in receipt of services) even though only 92% of services in this area provided data, followed by Donegal (n=2,525) and Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan (n=2,023). Fewest number reported by Kerry (n=216) followed by CN/MN (n=284) and Cork (n=348) (Table 34).

Table 34: Children in receipt of Family Support Services

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	Total number of children in receipt of a FSS at the end of Dec 2017
DSC	1,216	826	1,155
DSE/WW	651	615	451
DSW/K/WW	799	1,309	1,358
Midlands	775	525	654
DNC	1,487	1,740	1,300
Dublin North	1,544	1,355	1,643
LH/MH	1,374	673	738
CN/MN	236	352	284
Cork	310	286	348
Kerry	269	301	216
CW/KK/ST	905	1,022	755
WD/WX	1,145	956	938
MidWest	6,373	6,493	5,297
GY/RN	1,187	1,232	1,330
Mayo	971	437	511
Donegal	2,394	2,735	2,525
SLWC	2,581	1,740	2,023
Total	24,217	22,597	21,526

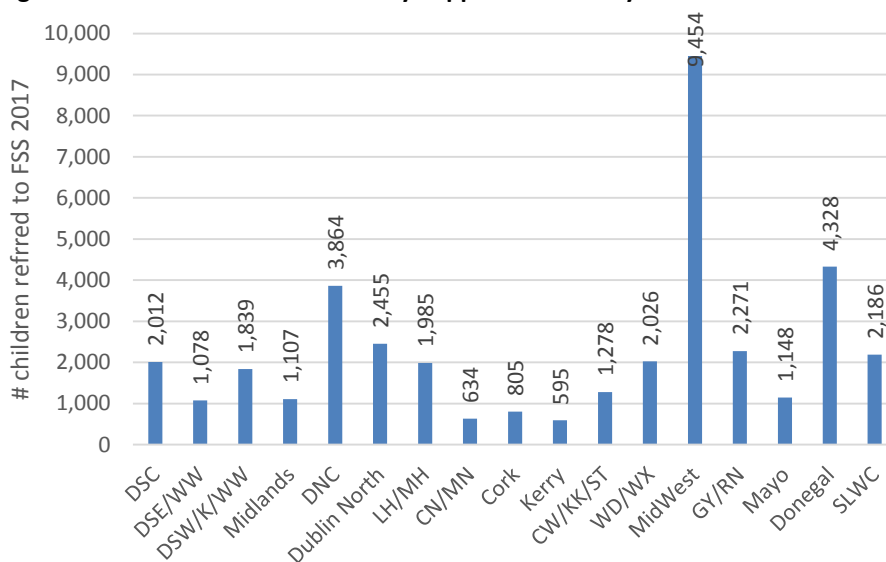
6.1.3 Children Referred to Family Support Services

- 20,671 children referred to family support services between July and December 2017 bringing the total number referred for 2017 to at least 39,065 (Table 35 and Figure 32). For the year 2017, the highest number was reported by the MidWest area (n=9,454; 24% of all children referred) followed by Donegal (n=4,328; 11%) and Dublin North City (n=3,864; 10%). Fewest number reported by Kerry (n=595) followed by CN/MN (n=634) and Cork (n=805).

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	Total number of children referred to FSS, Jul – Dec2017	Total referred 2017
DSC	984	752	1,260	2,012
DSE/WW	679	675	403	1,078
DSW/K/WW	640	924	915	1,839
Midlands	477	494	613	1,107
DNC	1,716	1,649	2,215	3,864
Dublin North	1,815	954	1,501	2,455
LH/MH	940	1,114	871	1,985
CN/MN	334	361	273	634
Cork	304	450	355	805
Kerry	235	297	298	595
CW/KK/ST	404	656	622	1,278
WD/WX	733	1,105	921	2,026
MidWest	3,233	4,314	5,140	9,454
GY/RN	1,234	1,119	1,152	2,271
Mayo	513	556	592	1,148
Donegal	984	2,132	2,196	4,328
SLWC	1,134	842	1,344	2,186
Total	16,359	18,394	20,671	39,065

Figure 32: Children referred to Family Support Services by area 2017



- The most common source of referral in 2017 was Parent/Guardian accounting for more than one in four referrals (n=10,640; 27%) followed by Tusla Social Work (n=7,922; 20%) and Schools (n=6,427; 16%). An Garda Síochána made 172 referrals, the highest number (n=37) of which were reported by Louth/Meath. Nearly half of the referrals from Schools (46%; n=2,969) were reported by the MidWest (Figure 33 and Table 36 and Table 37).

Figure 33: Children referred to Family Support Services by source of referral, 2017

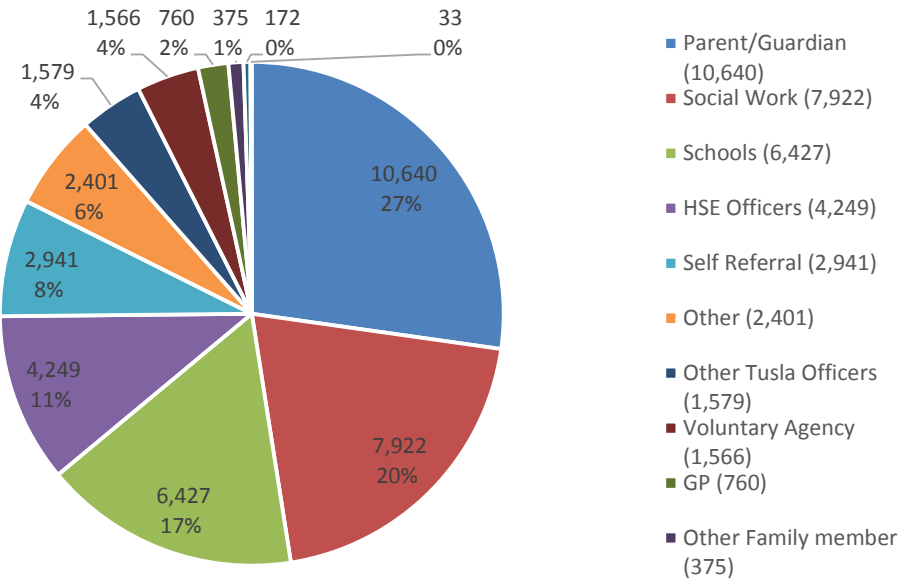


Table 36: Breakdown of source of referrals by area, Jul - Dec 2017

	Social Work	Other Tusla Officers	HSE Officers	An Garda Síochána	Self - Referral	Parent/Guardian	Other Family member	GP	Voluntary Agency	Anonymous	Schools	Other	Total
DSC	228	56	369	0	18	282	23	13	61	0	185	25	1,260
DSE/WW	140	4	53	1	0	143	1	12	21	0	27	1	403
DSW/K/WW	248	55	110	1	29	264	17	22	52	0	95	22	915
Midlands	165	40	83	0	46	188	9	1	7	0	66	8	613
DNC	447	119	216	9	39	805	6	60	71	0	260	183	2,215
Dublin North	477	61	136	0	46	494	34	21	116	0	50	66	1,501
LH/MH	411	25	51	2	25	208	4	11	9	1	22	102	871
CN/MN	179	38	15	12	0	11	0	3	8	0	7	0	273
Cork	110	58	22	7	108	21	2	0	7	0	14	6	355
Kerry	60	9	20	9	2	111	1	15	21	0	23	27	298
CW/KK/ST	140	33	60	5	19	130	20	12	0	0	13	190	622
WD/WX*	258	11	27	3	104	228	17	4	16	0	219	34	921
MidWest	435	304	258	3	502	1,672	60	34	150	4	1,619	99	5,140
GY/RN	291	117	96	8	73	422	0	29	24	0	38	54	1,152
Mayo	67	89	57	5	51	175	7	2	40	0	46	53	592
Donegal	180	21	268	7	354	351	15	18	44	0	871	67	2,196
SLWC	158	11	160	0	108	726	7	9	33	0	97	35	1,344
Total	3,994	1,051	2,001	72	1,524	6,231	223	266	680	5	3,652	972	20,671

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

Table 37: Breakdown of source of referrals 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
DSC	365	70	562	0	66	476	26	18	80	0	296	53	2,012
DSE/WW	333	11	152	3	6	352	8	38	70	0	88	17	1,078
DSW/K/WW	496	99	270	1	64	487	34	37	103	0	207	41	1,839
Midlands	330	76	149	0	95	240	14	3	30	0	146	24	1,107
DNC	981	149	419	14	71	1331	8	82	119	0	475	215	3,864
Dublin North	834	89	270	0	90	638	36	42	202	0	104	150	2,455
LH/MH	654	56	203	37	30	595	36	31	86	2	82	173	1,985
CN/MN	364	41	61	15	3	20	2	14	33	0	48	33	634
Cork	295	77	51	7	221	81	12	0	13	0	32	16	805
Kerry	97	12	41	16	7	221	2	38	41	0	57	63	595
CW/KK/ST	226	66	98	5	201	360	22	16	8	0	82	194	1,278
WD/WX*	737	11	33	3	104	243	17	4	20	0	222	632	2,026
MidWest	893	385	581	14	927	2,817	82	72	406	5	2,969	303	9,454
GY/RN	567	170	312	25	113	692	2	52	79	0	138	121	2,271
Mayo	101	140	97	7	67	387	9	6	86	0	135	113	1,148
Donegal	315	104	666	23	679	687	57	291	136	17	1,145	208	4,328
SLWC	334	23	284	2	197	1013	8	16	54	9	201	45	2,186
Total	7,922	1,579	4,249	172	2,941	10,640	375	760	1,566	33	6,427	2,401	39,065

- 74% (15,325) of children referred to family support services between July and December 2017 received a service (Table 38). The percentage who received a service ranged from 93% (n=2,050/2,196) in Donegal to 41% in Dublin North City (n=901/2,215). In ten of the 17 areas at least seven out of ten children referred received a service.
- Of the children referred to family support services (July – Dec 2017) who received a service 4% (n=627) were subject of a Child in Care Plan; 5% (n=776) were subject of a Tusla Social Work Child Protection Plan; 4.6% (n=698) were subject of a Tusla Social Work Family Support Plan; 2.8% (n=431) were subject of a Meitheal Support Plan while one in four (n=3,853); 25% was subject of a Single Agency Family Support Plan.

Table 38: Number of children referred to Family Support Services (Jul – Dec 2017) who received a service

				Of the total number of children referred to FSS (Jul – Dec 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	1,260	727	58%	32	50	49	31	395
DSE/WW	403	206	51%	15	55	15	19	99
DSW/K/WW	915	567	62%	25	20	40	38	53
Midlands	613	434	71%	4	32	37	6	92
DNC	2,215	901	41%	155	69	17	25	49
Dublin North	1,501	1,312	87%	15	30	78	21	325
LH/MH	871	432	50%	50	72	80	22	185
CN/MN	273	191	70%	15	24	31	12	109
Cork	355	177	50%	26	33	26	0	56
Kerry	298	223	75%	15	35	0	4	4
CW/KK/ST	622	561	90%	8	37	21	16	272
WD/WX	921	661	72%	13	26	11	101	115
MidWest	5,140	4,415	86%	164	149	83	37	823
GY/RN	1,152	870	76%	20	42	77	33	519
Mayo	592	361	61%	10	14	16	34	127
Donegal	2,196	2,050	93%	33	46	72	20	492
SLWC	1,344	1,237	92%	27	42	45	12	138
Total	20,671	15,325	74%	627 (4%)	776 (5%)	698 (4.6%)	431 (2.8%)	3,853 (25%)

- For the full year (2017), at least 73% (28,562/39,065) of children referred to family support services received a service (Table 39). The percentage who received a service ranged from 94% (n=4,071/4,328) in Donegal to 42% (n=453/1,078) in DSE/WW (range based on the 16 areas that provided data for the full year). In eight of these areas more than seven out of ten children referred received a service.

Table 39: Number of children referred to Family Support Services 2017 who received a service

				Of the total number of children referred to FSS (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	2,012	1,210	60%	50	72	80	40	542
DSE/WW	1,078	453	42%	26	82	57	41	197
DSW/K/WW	1,839	1,138	62%	33	51	80	77	149
Midlands	1,107	730	66%	27	69	78	14	205
DNC	3,864	2,098	54%	199	96	82	47	72
Dublin North	2,455	2,038	83%	31	58	97	33	757
LH/MH	1,985	895	45%	75	130	118	41	297
CN/MN	634	523	82%	38	63	75	29	169
Cork	805	446	55%	45	68	109	0	114
Kerry	595	466	78%	16	36	70	6	113
CW/KK/ST	1,278	1,090	85%	12	54	45	47	308
WD/WX	2,026	661	33%	13	26	11	101	115
MidWest	9,454	8,329	88%	308	257	195	78	1661
GY/RN	2,271	1,671	74%	36	121	144	49	907
Mayo	1,148	764	67%	60	17	35	55	226
Donegal	4,328	4,071	94%	73	97	127	36	952
SLWC	2,186	1,979	91%	56	102	116	32	336
Total	39,065	28,562	73%	1,098 (4%)	1,399 (4.9%)	1,519 (5.3%)	726 (2.5%)	7,120 (25%)

* WD/WX no data provided for Q1-Q2

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

- 1,409 Meitheal processes requested in 2017
- 52% (736) requested through Direct Access, 39% (554) requested through Social Work Diversion and 8% (119) Social Work Step Down
- 54% (766) of Meitheal processes requested in 2017 proceeded to Stage 2 (Discussion Stage)
- 655 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage 2 in 2017; 73% (475) of these proceeded to Stage 3 (Delivery)
- 794 Meitheal processes were closed in 2017; 54% (425) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form; 14% (111) closed following completion of Stage 2; 10% (76) closed following commencement of Stage 3 and 23% (182) closed post- delivery.
- 99 Child and Family Support Networks (CFSN) operating at the end of December 2017, with a further 35 planned.

6.2.1 Meitheal Activity Data

- 604 Meitheal processes requested in the second half of 2017 bringing the total number for 2017 to 1,409 (Tables 40 and 41). Highest number for 2017 was reported by CW/KK/ST (n=433; 31%) followed by Waterford/Wexford (n=178; 13%) and Dublin North (n=135; 10%). Fewest number reported by Cork (n=18) followed by Donegal (n=21). Eight reported fewer than 50 requests (Table 41).
- The most common pathway for requests in 2017 was Direct Access accounting for more than half (52%; 736) of all requests. Social Work Diversion accounted for a further 39% (n=554) of requests. Almost six in ten (n=328) of these requests were reported by CW/KK/ST. Social Work Step-Down accounted for fewer than one in ten requests (8%; 119) with the majority of areas reporting single figures.

- For 2017, the percentage of requests from Direct Access ranged from 92% (n=23/25) in Kerry to 21% (n=92/433) for CW/KK/ST, the area with the highest number of requests overall. Thirteen areas reported percentage above the national average of 52% (Table 41).
- The percentage of requests from Social Work Diversion ranged from 76% (n=328/433) in CW/KK/ST to 0% in Kerry (n=0/25). Fourteen areas reported a percentage below the national average of 39%.
- The percentage of requests from Social Work Step-Down²³ ranged from 38% (n=20/53) in the MidWest to 0% in GY/RN (n=0/96). Eleven areas reported a percentage under 10%.

Table 40: Meitheal processes requested, July – Dec 2017

Area	Total Meitheal processes Requested Q3 – Q4 2017	Of the total number of Meitheal requests for Q3 – Q4 2017 the number (%) where the access pathway was:					
		Direct Access	% Direct Access	Social Work Diversion	% SW Diversion	Social Work Step-Down	% Step-Down
DSC	18	18	100%	0	0%	0	0%
DSE/WW	26	17	65%	6	23%	3	12%
DSW/K/WW	39	32	82%	5	13%	2	5%
Midlands	21	20	95%	0	0%	1	5%
DNC	31	23	74%	7	23%	1	3%
Dublin North	87	73	84%	10	11%	4	5%
LH/MH	12	11	92%	1	8%	0	0%
CN/MN	13	4	31%	9	69%	0	0%
Cork	18	8	44%	4	22%	6	33%
Kerry	20	18	90%	0	0%	2	10%
CW/KK/ST	142	37	26%	98	69%	7	5%
WD/WX	78	31	40%	41	53%	6	8%
MidWest	24	14	58%	1	4%	9	38%
GY/RN	33	33	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Mayo	22	9	41%	8	36%	5	23%
Donegal	12	10	83%	2	17%	0	0%
SLWC	8	8	100%	0	0%	0	0%
National	604	366	61%	192	32%	46	8%

Table 41: Meitheal processes requested, 2017

Area	Total Meitheal processes Requested 2017	Of the total number of Meitheal requests for 2017 the number (%) where the access pathway was:					
		Direct Access	% Direct Access	Social Work Diversion	% SW Diversion	Social Work Step-Down	% Step-Down
DSC	35	29	83%	3	9%	3	9%

²³ 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.

DSE/WW	66	48	73%	13	20%	5	8%
DSW/K/WW	74	55	74%	7	9%	12	16%
Midlands	36	32	89%	2	6%	2	6%
DNC	79	46	58%	29	37%	4	5%
Dublin North	135	93	69%	21	16%	21	16%
LH/MH	31	25	81%	5	16%	1	3%
CN/MN	28	14	50%	13	46%	1	4%
Cork	18	8	44%	4	22%	6	33%
Kerry	25	23	92%	0	0%	2	8%
CW/KK/ST	433	92	21%	328	76%	13	3%
WD/WX	178	74	42%	88	49%	16	9%
MidWest	53	29	55%	4	8%	20	38%
GY/RN	96	83	86%	13	14%	0	0%
Mayo	56	30	54%	17	30%	9	16%
Donegal	21	16	76%	2	10%	3	14%
SLWC	45	39	87%	5	11%	1	2%
National	1,409	736	52%	554	39%	119	8%

- 57% (n=346) of the Meitheal requests received in the second half of 2017 proceeded to Stage Two (Discussion Stage) (Table 42).
- All requests proceeded to Stage Two in two areas, DSE/WW (n=26/26) and Kerry (n=20/20). None of the requests proceeded to Stage Two in Cork while only 25% (36/142) proceeded in CW/KK/ST. More than 70% of requests proceeded to Stage Two in 12 areas.

Table 42: Number of Meitheal requests received (Jul-Dec 2017) proceeding to Stage Two (Discussion Stage)

Area	Total Meitheal processes requested Q3 – Q4 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	18	16	89%
DSE/WW	26	26	100%
DSW/K/WW	39	38	97%
Midlands	21	16	76%
DNC	31	20	65%
Dublin North	87	25	29%
LH/MH	12	10	83%
CN/MN	13	11	85%
Cork	18	0	0%
Kerry	20	20	100%
CW/KK/ST	142	36	25%
WD/WX	78	44	56%
MidWest	24	23	96%
GY/RN	33	24	73%
Mayo	22	20	91%
Donegal	12	11	92%

SLWC	8	6	75%
National	604	346	57%

- For the year 2017, 54% (n=766) of the Meitheal requests received proceeded to Stage Two (Discussion Stage) (Table 43). The highest rate was reported by Kerry (100%) followed by DSW/K/WW (96%), DSE/WW (95%) and Dublin South Central (94%). None of the requests proceeded to Stage Two in Cork (0/18) and fewer than one in five (18%; 80/433) proceeded to Stage Two in CW/KK/ST. More than seven out of ten requests proceeded to Stage Two in 11 of the areas.

Table 43: Number of Meitheal requests received (2017) proceeding to Stage Two (Discussion Stage)

Area	Total Meitheal processes requested 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	35	33	94%
DSE/WW	66	63	95%
DSW/K/WW	74	71	96%
Midlands	36	27	75%
DNC	79	64	81%
Dublin North	135	63	47%
LH/MH	31	26	84%
CN/MN	28	24	86%
Cork	18	0	0%
Kerry	25	25	100%
CW/KK/ST	433	80	18%
WD/WX	178	93	52%
MidWest	53	36	68%
GY/RN	96	64	67%
Mayo	56	43	77%
Donegal	21	17	81%
SLWC	45	37	82%
National	1,409	766	54%

- 273 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage Two between Jul - Dec 2017. Highest number reported by CW/KK/ST (n=30) followed by DSW/K/WW (n=27) and Dublin North (n=25). The fewest number was reported by CN/MN (n=5) followed by Donegal (n=7) and SLWC (n=8) (Table 44). *None of the requests in Cork proceeded to Stage Two.*
- 74% (n=202) of processes reaching completion of Stage Two, proceeded to delivery (Stage 3) (Meitheal Support Meeting). Eleven areas reported a percentage above 70%. The lowest percentage was reported by WD/WX (35%; 8/23) followed by Dublin North City (50%; n=10/20).
- Five (2%) processes were referred to social work (stepped – up).

Table 44: Meitheal processes reaching completion of Stage Two, Jul - Dec 2017

Area	Number of Meitheal Processes Reaching Completion of Stage Two, Jul-Dec 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	18	16	89%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	11%
DSE/WW	17	17	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
DSW/K/WW	27	25	93%	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	1	4%
Midlands	9	7	78%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	22%
DNC	20	10	50%	1	5%	2	10%	3	15%	4	20%
Dublin North	25	25	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
LH/MH	11	8	73%	0	0%	0	0%	3	27%	0	0%
CN/MN	5	4	80%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Cork											
Kerry	20	18	90%	1	5%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%
CW/KK/ST	30	18	60%	0	0%	11	37%	1	3%	0	0%
WD/WX	23	8	35%	0	0%	11	48%	4	17%	0	0%
MidWest	12	9	75%	0	0%	2	17%	1	8%	0	0%
GY/RN	21	13	62%	1	5%	6	29%	1	5%	0	0%
Mayo	20	13	65%	0	0%	1	5%	6	30%	0	0%
Donegal	7	5	71%	1	14%	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%
SLWC	8	6	75%	0	0%	0	0%	2	25%	0	0%
National	273	202	74%	5	2%	33	12%	24	9%	9	3%

- 655 Meitheal processes reached completion of Stage Two (Table 45). Highest number reported by GY/RN (n=79) followed by DSW/K/WW (n=77). The fewest number was reported by Donegal (n=13) followed CN/MN (n=17) (Table 45).
- 73% (n=475) of processes reaching completion of Stage Two, proceeded to delivery (Stage 3) (Meitheal Support Meeting). Twelve areas reported a percentage above 70%. The lowest percentage was reported by WD/WX (32%; 17/53) followed by GY/RN (57%; n=45/79) and CW/KK/ST (64%; n=37/58).
- 23 (4%) processes were referred to social work (stepped – up).
- 70 (11%) processes were referred to a single agency response. The majority of these were reported by WD/WX (n=30) and CW/KK/ST (n=15).
- 71 (11%) processes were closed at the end of Stage 2. The highest number was reported by GY/RN (n=22).

Table 45: Meitheal processes reaching completion of Stage Two, 2017

Area	Number of Meitheal Processes Reaching Completion of Stage Two, Jul-Dec 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	35	32	91%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	9%
DSE/WW	48	44	92%	0	0%	0	0%	4	8%	0	0%
DSW/K/WW	77	63	82%	5	6%	0	0%	8	10%	1	1%
Midlands	20	16	80%	1	5%	1	5%	0	0%	2	10%
DNC	57	42	74%	4	7%	2	4%	4	7%	5	9%
Dublin North	61	48	79%	0	0%	7	11%	5	8%	1	2%
LH/MH	22	16	73%	0	0%	3	14%	3	14%	0	0%
CN/MN	17	14	82%	1	6%	0	0%	2	12%	0	0%
Cork											
Kerry	25	21	84%	3	12%	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%
CW/KK/ST	58	37	64%	2	3%	15	26%	4	7%	0	0%
WD/WX	53	17	32%	1	2%	30	57%	5	9%	0	0%
MidWest	20	17	100%	0	0%	2	0%	1	0%	0	0%
GY/RN	79	45	57%	5	6%	7	9%	22	28%	0	0%
Mayo	43	30	70%	0	0%	3	7%	8	19%	2	5%
Donegal	13	10	77%	1	8%	0	0%	2	15%	0	0%
SLWC	27	23	85%	0	0%	0	0%	2	7%	2	7%
National	655	475	73%	23	4%	70	11%	71	11%	16	2%

- 289 Meitheals closed during the second half of 2017. 38% (n=110) of Meitheals closed were reported by CW/KK/ST. The majority (n=14) areas reported fewer than 20 closures (Table 46).
- Half (50%; n=144) of requests were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form (Stage 1) and of these 56% (n=81/144) were reported by CW/KK/ST. Almost three-quarters (74%; n= 81/110) of Meitheals closed in CW/KK/ST were closed following submission of the Meitheal request form.
- Fewer than one in ten (8%; n= 23/289) was closed following completion of the Strengths and Needs Form (Stage 2). More than half (57%; 13/23) of those closed following completion of the Strengths and Needs Form were reported by WD/WX. All other areas reported two or fewer.
- 11% (33/289) were closed following commencement of Meitheal Support Meetings (Stage 3). Highest number of these (n=12/33; 36%) was reported by GY/RN.
- Almost one-third (31%; n=89) were closed post-delivery. Highest number of these was reported by CW/K/ST (n=25) followed by Mayo (n=14).

Table 46: Number of Meitheals closed, Jul - Dec 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	2	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
DSE/WW	2	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	0	0%
DSW/K/WW	18	4	22%	1	6%	6	33%	7	39%
Midlands	8	1	13%	0	0%	0	0%	7	88%
DNC	16	5	31%	1	6%	3	19%	7	44%
Dublin North	6	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%	0	0%
LH/MH	3	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
CN/MN	5	0	0%	2	40%	0	0%	3	60%
Cork	0	0							
Kerry	4	0	0%	1	25%	0	0%	3	75%
CW/KK/ST	110	81	74%	2	2%	2	2%	25	23%
WD/WX	50	30	60%	13	26%	1	2%	6	12%
MidWest	5	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%	4	80%
GY/RN	25	9	36%	0	0%	12	48%	4	16%
Mayo	20	5	25%	1	5%	0	0%	14	70%
Donegal	4	2	50%	1	25%	0	0%	1	25%
SLWC	11	3	27%	1	9%	1	9%	6	55%
National	289	144	50%	23	8%	33	11%	89	31%

- 794 Meitheals closed in 2017. The highest number (316; 40%) was reported by CW/KK/ST followed by WD/WX (121; 15%). All other areas reported substantially fewer (Table 47).
- More than half (54%; n=425) were closed following submission of a Meitheal request form (Stage 1) and of these 62% (262/425) were reported by CW/KK/ST. More than eight out of 10 (83%; 262/316) Meitheals closed in CW/KK/ST were closed following submission of the Meitheal request form.
- 14% (111) of Meitheals were closed following completion of the Strengths and Needs Form (Stage 2). The highest number was reported by WD/WX accounting for almost a third (32%; 35/111) of those closed following completion of the Strengths and Needs Form. The majority of other areas reported fewer than 10.
- 10% (76) were closed following commencement of Meitheal Support Meetings (Stage 3). Highest number of these (n=24/76; 32%) was reported by GY/RN.
- Almost one in four (23%; 182) was closed post-delivery. Highest number of these was reported by CW/K/ST (n=34) followed by DSW/K/WW (n=20) and Midlands (n=20).

Table 47: Number of Meitheals closed, 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	6	1	17%	1	17%	1	17%	3	50%
DSE/WW	11	4	36%	4	36%	1	9%	2	18%
DSW/K/WW	39	8	21%	1	3%	10	26%	20	51%
Midlands	29	4	14%	5	17%	0	0%	20	69%
DNC	30	9	30%	3	10%	5	17%	13	43%
Dublin North	30	6	20%	9	30%	9	30%	6	20%
LH/MH	23	10	43%	1	4%	1	4%	11	48%
CN/MN	25	0	0%	4	16%	2	8%	19	76%
Cork	0								
Kerry	11	0	0%	1	9%	2	18%	8	73%
CW/KK/ST	316	262	83%	15	5%	5	2%	34	11%
WD/WX	121	79	65%	35	29%	1	1%	6	5%
MidWest	9	0	0%	0	0%	5	56%	4	44%
GY/RN	66	14	21%	22	33%	24	36%	6	9%
Mayo	26	6	23%	4	15%	0	0%	16	62%
Donegal	18	6	33%	2	11%	5	28%	5	28%
SLWC	34	16	47%	4	12%	5	15%	9	26%
National	794	425	54%	111	14%	76	10%	182	23%

6.2.2 Child and Family Support Networks

- 99 Child and Family Support Networks²⁴ (CFSN) operating at the end of December 2017 with a further 35 CFSNs planned (Table 48).
- Galway/Roscommon reported the highest number of networks operating (n=12). Donegal and MidWest reported the fewest (n=2).

Table 48: Child and Family Support Networks operating and planned June 2016

Area	CFSNs Operating Dec 2017	CFSNs Planned Dec 2017
DSC	5	2
DSE/Wicklow	7	2
DSW/K/WW	5	9
Midlands	7	0
Dublin North City	6	0

²⁴ 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

Dublin North	4	0
Louth/Meath	5	5
Cavan/Monaghan	7	2
Cork	8	7
Kerry	8	0
CW/KK/ST	7	0
WD/WX	8	0
MidWest	2	5
GY/RN	12	0
Mayo	3	0
Donegal	2	3
SLWC	3	0
National	99	35

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

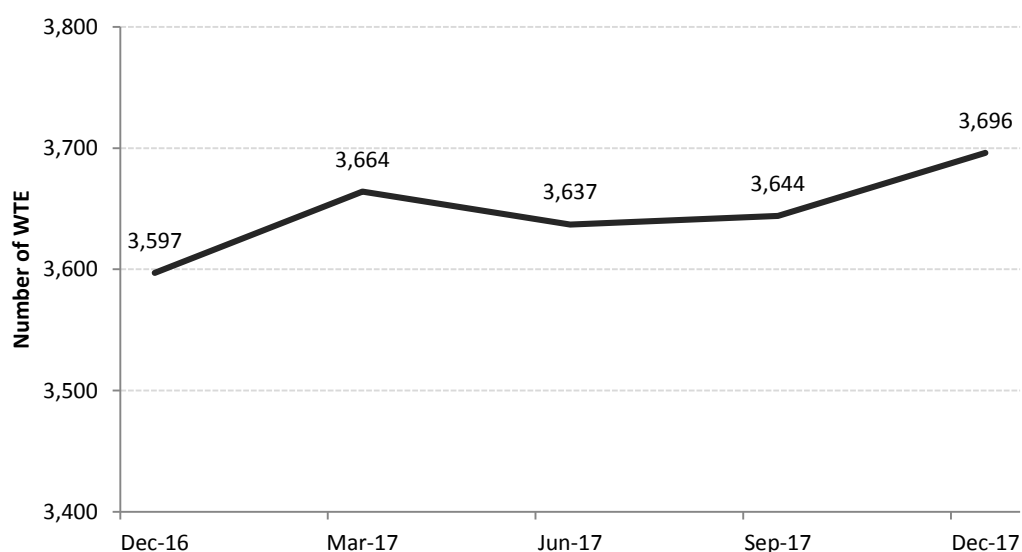
KEY FACTS

- 3,696 (WTE) employed by the Agency at the end of Q4 2017; 52 more than Q3 2017 and 99 more than Q4 2016
- 394 new staff came on to the Agency's payroll in 2017
- 337 staff left (incl. retirements) the Agency in 2017
- 150 staff on maternity leave (incl. 40 unpaid) at the end of December 2017
- 503 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of December 2017
- 4.83% absence rate (Nov 2017); 0.17 percentage points lower than Q3 2017
- 704 courses run by Workforce Learning & Development during Q4 2017; 11,028 persons attended

7.1 Workforce Position

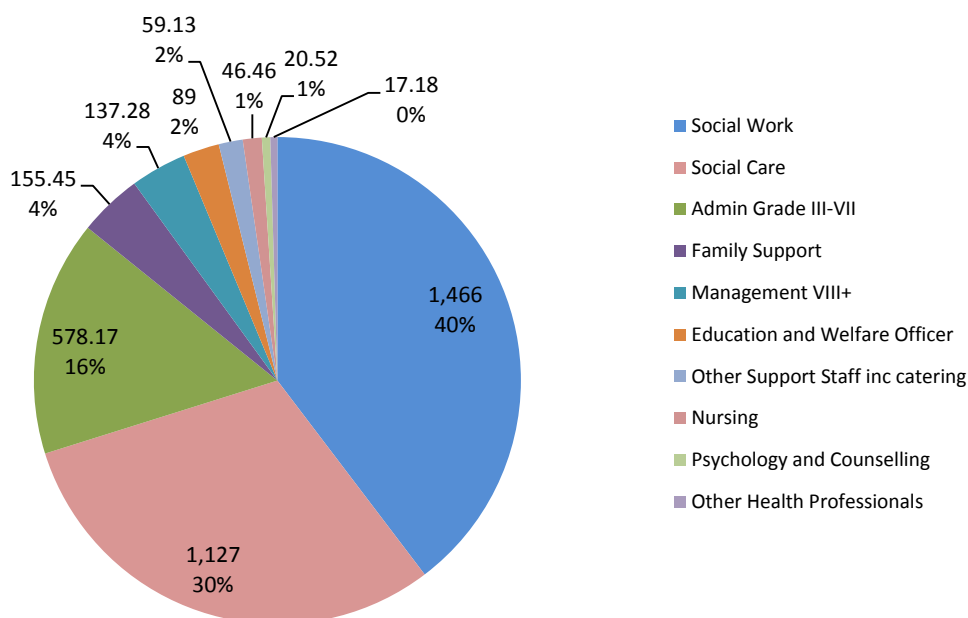
- 3,696 whole time equivalent (WTE) staff (excluding agency staff) employed by Tusla at the end of Q4 2017; 52 more than Q3 2017 and 99 more than Q4 2016 (Figure 34).

Figure 34: 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=1,466) of total staff (WTE) employed at the end of Q4 2017, followed by social care staff accounting for a further 30% (n=1,127). Management (Grade VIII+) account for 4% (137.28) of the workforce (Figure 35).

Figure 35: Breakdown of staff category (WTE), Q4 2017



- All staff categories with the exception of Family Support and Other Support Staff experienced an increase in WTEs between Q3 2017 and Q4 2017 (Table 49). The highest increase was observed for Social Care (up 18.67) followed by Management Grade VIII and above (up 12.35) and Admin Grades III – VII (up 10.90).

Table 49: Breakdown of staff (WTE) by category and year and quarter

Staffing by Category	Dec 2016	Sep-17	Dec-17	Δ+/- Q4 2017 v Q3 2017
Social Work	1,457.67	1,460.53	1,465.98	5.45
Social Care	1,119.37	1,108.48	1,127.15	18.67
Admin Grade III-VII	517.46	567.27	578.17	10.90
Family Support	162.61	159.23	155.45	-3.78
Management VIII+	107.57	124.93	137.28	12.35
Education and Welfare Officer	86.22	88.08	89	0.92
Other Support Staff inc catering	62.72	59.41	59.13	-0.28
Nursing	50.6	45.58	46.46	0.88
Psychology and Counselling	23.23	19.92	20.52	0.60
Other Health Professionals	9.82	10.36	17.18	6.82
Total Staffing	3,597	3,644	3,696	52.00

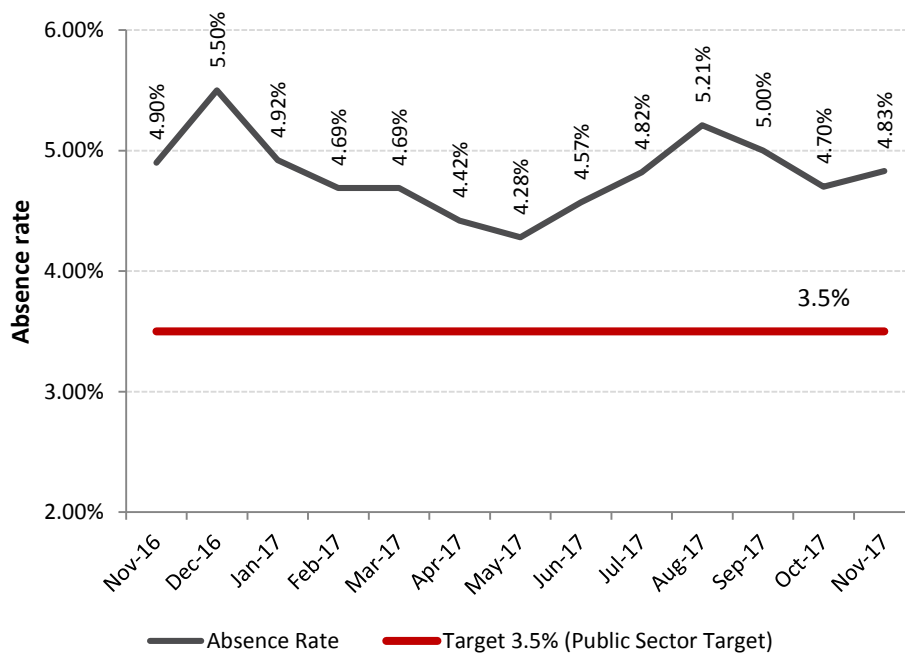
- 394 new staff joined Tusla (came onto Tusla's payroll) in 2017
- 247 staff left Tusla (i.e., resigned, career breaks, excluding retirements) in 2017

- 90 staff retired in 2017
- 150 staff were on maternity leave at the end of December 2017 of which 73% (n=110) were on paid maternity leave
- 503 agency staff employed by Tusla at the end of December 2017.

7.2 Absence Rate

- At the end of November 2017²⁵ the overall absence rate for the Agency was 4.83% against a target of 3.5% (target for public sector); 0.17 percentage points lower than Q3 2017 2017 and 0.07 percentage points lower than November 2016 (Figure 36).

Figure 36: Overall staff absence rate by month



- The highest absence rate was reported for social care staff (7.23%) (Table 50). The rate for Residential Services was 8.84% (data not shown), 4.01 percentage points higher than the overall rate of 4.83%.

Table 50: Absence rate by staff grade

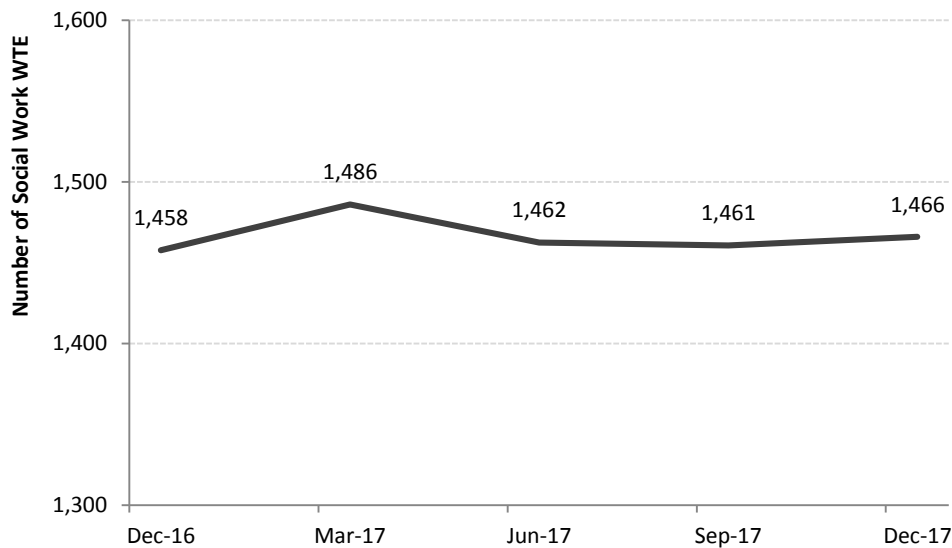
Staff Grade	Absence Rate Q3 2017	Absence Rate Nov 2017
Social Work	4.15%	4.09%
Social Care	7.91%	7.23%
All other grades	3.54%	3.5%

²⁵ Absence rates are reported monthly in arrears

7.3 Social Work Staff (WTE)

- 1,466 whole time equivalent (WTE) social work staff (all grades and excluding agency staff) employed by Tusla at the end of Q4 2017; five more than Q3 2017 and eight more than Q4 2016 (Figure 37).

Figure 37: Number of social workers (WTE) by month



- 180 social workers joined Tusla (came onto Tusla's payroll) in 2017
- 138 social workers left (i.e., resigned, career breaks excluding retirements) Tusla in 2017
- 23 social workers retired between in 2017
- 91 social workers (incl. 21 unpaid) were on maternity leave at the end of December 2017
- 204 agency social workers were employed at the end of December 2017
- At the end of November 2017²⁶ the absence rate for social workers was running at 4.09%, 0.74 percentage points lower than the overall rate (4.83%).
- A breakdown of the number of social workers (all grades) employed at the end of each quarter Q4 2016 – Q4 2017 by area is presented in Table 51.

²⁶ Absence data is reported a month in arrears

Table 51: Breakdown of social work staff (WTE) by area Q4 2016 – Q4 2017

	Social Work (WTE)	Social Work (WTE)	Social Work (WTE)	Social Work (WTE)	Social Work (WTE)
Area	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017
DSC	78.84	80.6	78.23	75.02	75.06
DSE/WW	97.96	107.15	101.17	101.79	99.52
DSW/K/WW	85.26	90.28	84.75	98.12	99.59
Midlands	74.86	77.97	75.62	75.44	78.62
Regional Services DML	18.02	19.78	22.63	22.83	21.99
DML Total	350.94	375.78	362.4	373.2	374.78
CN/MN	30.22	35.42	33.45	30.4	34.45
DNC	99.56	98.91	96.21	88.81	92.66
LH/MH	77.48	76.99	75.08	73.54	74.88
Dublin North	72.06	71.33	63.83	67.22	71.13
Regional Services DNE	32.83	33.78	33.4	27.68	28.34
DNE Total	312.15	316.13	301.97	287.65	301.46
CW/KK/ST	66.27	66.32	66.68	66.87	63.24
Cork	159.19	158.25	159.93	156.17	152.36
Kerry	41.27	39.59	39.31	39.97	40.35
WD/WX	83.11	85.64	85.75	86.48	84.39
Regional Services South	3.87	3.98	3.98	3.98	3.98
South Total	353.71	353.78	355.65	353.47	344.32
Donegal	61.17	60.99	62.76	64.53	63.66
GY/RN	89.9	92.08	90.4	91.77	92.08
Mayo	38.52	38.52	39.23	36.71	37.01
Mid West	117.73	116.23	115.44	110.46	107.02
SLWC	38.98	37.57	36.02	38.43	38.01
Regional Services West	2	4	1	1	1
West Total	348.3	349.39	344.85	342.9	
Residential DML	3.87	3	3	2	1.99
Residential DNE	4.37	2.61	2.84	2.89	2.89
Residential West					
Residential South	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.24	3.72
Residential Services	12.64	10.01	10.24	9.13	8.6
Corporate	76.93	76.95	84.19	89.22	93.09
Early Years Service	3	4	3.17	4.96	4.95
Corporate	79.93	80.95	85.55	94.18	98.04
Total	1,457.67	1,486.04	1,462.47	1460.53	1,465.98

7.4 Workforce Learning and Development

- Workforce Learning and Development (WLD) ran a total of 704 courses during Q4 2017 at which a total of 11,028 persons attended. A breakdown of the courses run and attendees by type is presented in the table below.
- During Q4 the most frequently run course was Child and Youth Participation Training with 63 courses run. This was followed by Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, six monthly refresher, with 49 courses run and Meitheal Standardised Training Course with 48 course run.
- A total of 7,638 Tusla staff attended training during Q4 2017 and of these 45% (n = 3,460/7,638) were social workers.
- A total of 3,127 external staff attended training in Q4; the highest number (21%: n = 649/3127) of whom received Aftercare Legislation and Policy Briefings.
- There were 159 courses categorised as 'Other' courses. These courses which constitute 23% 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 Q4

- Introduction to Children First, an online training programme to support implementation of Children First Act 2015 and Children First Guidance 2017 was launched. This programme was made mandatory for all Tusla staff and by December 2017 over 2,000 staff had completed it.
- The Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative (EPPI) Conference was held in Croke Park during November and showcased Tusla staff learning from their involvement in the Evidence Informed Practice (EIP) Programme.
- The 2017 Prevention Partnership and Family Support (PPFS) conference was coordinated by WLD personnel in Kilkenny in November and provided opportunities to share learning and celebrate successes in a variety of initiatives.
- A leadership development programme titled 'Everyday Inspirational Leadership' was piloted in two locations and will be made widely available to frontline managers in 2018.

WLD NATIONAL TRAINING DATA - 2017	NO. COURSES HELD	NO. TUSLA SOCIAL	NO. TUSLA OTHER STAFF	NO. HSE STAFF	NO. OTHER EXT STAFF	TOTAL NO. ATTENDEES
Aftercare Legislation & Policy Briefings	41	437	807	36	649	1929
Assessment & Analysis	2	27	4	0	0	31
Attachment Theory into Practice	25	238	143	1	17	399
Case Load Management	6	46	0	0	0	46
Children First Training 2011 for Tusla Staff	29	117	384	0	72	573
Core Court Room Skills	8	74	24	0	6	104
CPD Strategy Briefings	10	24	95	0	2	121
Direct Work with Children	11	78	54	0	8	140
Diversity in Modern Ireland	9	62	58	0	3	123
Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence	16	61	62	29	100	252
Grade III & IV Admin Development Program	3	0	51	0	0	51
Introduction to Court Skills	8	48	52	0	12	112
Legal Briefing Seminar	10	204	128	0	8	340
Making the Most of Supervision for Supervisors	9	44	44	0	1	89
Marte Meo Communication Skills Training -	4	12	33	0	0	45
NCCIS User Training	17	53	57	0	0	110
Practice Development for New Social Workers	16	188	0	0	5	193
Reflective Recording & Report Writing	11	77	58	0	14	149
Response Ability Pathways	5	26	38	0	16	80
SAOR	12	88	58	0	4	150
Signs of Safety - Practice Leader	1	37	7	0	0	44
Signs of Safety (2 Day)	2	132	72	0	2	206
Staff Supervision Skills for Supervisors	7	17	26	12	1	56
Suicide Prevention - SafeTALK	7	52	27	6	27	112
Sureskills Ltd - Excel	8	0	81	0	0	81
Sureskills Ltd - Word	8	0	62	0	0	62
Sureskills Ltd - Powerpoint	4	0	60	0	0	60
TCI (de-escalation) - for Family Care Providers	6	0	5	0	98	103
Therapeutic Crisis Intervention - Core	3	0	9	0	19	28
Therapeutic Crisis Intervention - Six Monthly	49	0	280	0	313	593
Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events	1	0	25	0	0	25
TUSLA PMLF	1	3	5	0	0	8
Understanding Juveniles - exhibit SHB	4	62	9	0	2	73
Other	159	987	590	20	594	2191
Child and Youth Participation Training	63	192	373	1	80	646
Meitheal Briefing	40	15	104	97	293	509
Meitheal Facilitators Chairs Meeting	17	3	62	5	92	162
Meitheal Record Keeper Training	1	0	10	0	3	13
Meitheal Standardised Refresher Course	5	0	13	0	44	57
Meitheal Standardised Train the Trainer	1	1	6	0	4	11
Meitheal Standardised Training Course	48	44	74	44	525	687
Parenting Support Champion Training - Attachment	2	1	20	2	21	44
Parenting Support Champion Training - Diver	2	0	32	0	0	32
PPFS /Meitheal Other	13	10	76	10	92	188
TOTAL	704	3460	4178	263	3127	11028

8.0 FINANCE

KEY FACTS

- The financial outturn for 2017 an under-spend of €5.405 million
- Pay costs are under-spent against budget by €13.190 million
- Non pay costs are over-spent against budget by €10.602 million
- Key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €9.228 million over budget
- 46% (€13.862 million) of legal expenditure year to date on guardians ad litem (GALs), including GAL's solicitors and counsel.

Financial Performance

- The outturn for the full year 2017 is an under-spend of €5.405 million. The higher than expected under-spend is principally related to pay-related savings due to a lower than expected increase in net WTE staff on the payroll by year end, and a decrease in legal accruals and holiday pay accruals in December.
- The net expenditure for 2017 is €675.743 million against a budget allocation of €681.148 million.
- Pay costs are under-spent against budget by €13.190 million (Table 52).

Table 52: Pay Costs

Child and Family Agency	2017			% Variance Act vs Budget
	Actual	Budget	Variance	
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Pay costs	257,065	270,256	(13,190)	(5%)

- Non-pay costs are over-spent against budget by €10.602 million (Table 53).

Table 53: Non Pay Costs

Child and Family Agency	2017			% Variance Act vs Budget
	Actual	Budget	Variance	
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Non pay costs	441,002	430,400	10,602	2%

- A key area of over-spend is private residential and foster care costs at €9.228 million over-spend YTD (Table 54). 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 54: Private Residential and Foster Care Costs

Child and Family Agency	2017			% Variance Act vs Budget
	Actual	Budget	Variance	
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Private Residential & Foster Care	100,000	91,275	9,228	10%

- Legal costs incurred by the Agency account for a significant portion of the overall budget of the Agency. The financial position shows a spend of €29.853 million for 2017 against a budget of €28.303 million (i.e., €1.549 million over-spend).
- A breakdown of legal expenditure by type is presented in Table 55.
- 46% (n=€13,862 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 55: Legal Expenditure

Type	2017 €'000s
3rd Party Counsel Fees	533
3rd Party Solicitors Fees	1,823
Contracted Legal Services	11,666
Counsel fees - Tusla	1,205
Guardian ad Litem Costs	7,685
Guardian ad Litem Counsel fees	994
Guardian ad Litem Solicitors fees	5,183
General Legal Fees	262
Court Settlements	(283)
Other	786
Net Expenditure	29,853

APPENDIX I

ABBREVIATIONS

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

Service Area	Abbreviation
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 II – Hiqa Inspections Main Findings

This section provides a summary of the main findings from inspection reports published by Hiqa in Q4 2017. Areas/Services have drawn up action plans to address deficits identified and implementation of these actions is underway.

FOSTERING REPORTS

Carlow / Kilkenny / South Tipperary- inspection took place in June 2017

8 standards assessed: 1 compliant, 3 substantially compliant, 4 non-compliant (major)

- Some systems for safeguarding were found to be good. The system in place to ensure An Garda Síochána vetting had been completed was robust and effective. Staff were familiar with the principles of whistleblowing and how to make a protected disclosure. All new foster carers attended foundational training for foster carers which covered areas of Children First (2011).
- Assessments of general and relative foster carers completed in the area were comprehensive and of good quality. The fostering service had some good initiatives to support and up skill foster carers. The supports in place for foster carers caring for children with complex needs were good and the oversight from the management team was also good in these cases. Where reviews were completed, they were of good quality.
- There was an overall formal plan for the recruitment and retention of foster carers and recruitment strategies were targeted to meet the needs of the area.
- The work of the Foster Care Committee was effective and they made clear decisions.
- At the time of inspection there were 31 foster carers who did not have an allocated link worker; the supervision of and support for some allocated and all unallocated foster carers was not good.
- The oversight on foster carer files was varied and in some cases, poor.
- Inspectors were not assured that the fostering service was sufficiently resourced to provide adequate oversight.
- A significant number of foster carers did not have up-to-date reviews. 241 foster carers or 71% had not had a review for more than three years.

National Standards for Foster Care	Judgment
Theme 2: Safe and Effective Services	
Standard 10: Safeguarding and child protection	Non-compliant Major
Standard 14a: Assessment and approval of non-relative foster carers	Substantially compliant
Standard 14b: Assessment and approval of relative foster carers	Substantially compliant
Standard 15: Supervision and support	Non-compliant Major
Standard 16: Training	Substantially compliant
Standard 17: Reviews of foster carers	Non-compliant Major
Theme 4: Leadership, Governance and Management	
Standard 23: The Foster Care Committee	Non-compliant Major
Theme 5: Use of Resources	
Standard 21: Recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers	Compliant

Cork - inspection took place in August 2017

Follow-up inspection, relating to safeguarding and child protection, assessment, supervision and review of foster carers. A principal social worker was appointed to this fostering service 6 weeks before the inspection.

4 standards assessed: all non-compliant (major)

- While some agreed actions had been taken to address risks identified in the previous inspection, inspectors found that the majority of actions had not been fully implemented.
- While the timeframe had not yet been reached for a number of actions to be implemented, there were some actions which had not been implemented within the timeframes identified by the area. For instance, the service area had indicated that all 73 relative carers awaiting an assessment had been allocated a link worker, however this action had not been fully implemented and 42 relative carers remained unallocated.
- Tusla identified that outstanding Garda vetting for all carers had either been completed or was being processed by the Garda Vetting Bureau. However inspectors identified relative carers who still did not have Garda vetting and this vetting had not yet been sent to the Garda vetting unit to be processed, by the time of this inspection. Not all foster carers had up-to-date Garda vetting. HIQA escalated 10 cases which related to relative carers and or adults living in the foster care home who had not had Garda vetting.
- 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 consistently responded to in line with Children First (2011).
- Records of the management of allegations were not evident on files.
- Since the last inspection, a formal system had been put in place to ensure the foster care committee was notified of child protection and welfare concerns and allegations. However, this system was in the early stages of development as the backlog of previously un-notified cases was being notified to the foster care committee.
- There remained significant delays in the commencement and completion of relative assessments.
- There remained a large number of approved carers who had not yet received Children First (2011) training. While some steps had been taken to ensure foster care reviews were comprehensive and completed in line with regulations, this had not occurred in a timely manner.
- Following the inspection, HIQA wrote to the chief operating officer of Tusla regarding the risks which had been identified on the previous inspection that remained a risk on this inspection.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

OSV-0004186 (SOUTH) - inspection took place in June 2017

10 standards assessed: 1 compliant, 1 substantially compliant, 4 non-compliant (major), 4 non-compliant (moderate)

- At the time of last inspection (November 2016), managers and staff were having difficulty in managing behaviour that challenges and inspectors sought assurances that all the children were suitably placed and that the issues of concern were being adequately addressed. The building was also considered unsuitable for the creation of a homely atmosphere for children.
- Improvements were also required in the areas of management and staffing, children's rights, statutory requirements, education and medicines management.
- On this inspection, inspectors found that the difficulties in managing behaviour that challenges had worsened for a period of approximately five months until they were behavior that challenges were mainly resolved in late April 2017. However, inspectors found that the issues were not resolved in a timely manner with the result that children were subjected to bullying, intimidation, physical assault, property damage, and an atmosphere of fear during that time.
- An interim centre manager was appointed in February 2017 and has introduced several changes that has led to improvements in the centre.
- However, there were a number of areas where improvements were required including, protocols and procedures between the residential service and the social work department, children's rights, planning for children, behaviour that challenges, notifications of serious incidents, safeguarding of children, health and safety and fire safety along with management and staffing.

Standard	Judgment
Theme 1: Child - centred Services	
Standard 4: Children's Rights	Non Compliant - Moderate
Theme 2: Safe & Effective Care	
Standard 5: Planning for Children and Young People	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 6: Care of Young People	Non Compliant - Major
Standard 7: Safeguarding and Child Protection	Non Compliant - Major
Standard 10: Premises and Safety	Non Compliant - Major
Theme 3: Health & Development	
Standard 8: Education	Substantially Compliant
Standard 9: Health	Non Compliant - Moderate
Theme 4: Leadership, Governance & Management	
Standard 1: Purpose and Function	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 2: Management and Staffing	Non Compliant - Major
Standard 3: Monitoring	Compliant

OSV-0004184 (SOUTH) - inspection took place in August 2017

The centre provides medium to long term residential care for up to three male children aged between 13 and 17 years on admission, whom were separated children seeking asylum.

7 standards assessed: all non-compliant (moderate)

- The children told inspectors that they felt safe, the staff were nice and they had opportunities to participate in activities in the community.
- Two of three children spoken to were dissatisfied with their placement and had requested a transfer back to Dublin.
- Inspectors found that the children's quality of life was mixed. Some factors negatively affecting the quality of life for young people in the centre, were specifically related to the process and experience of separated children seeking asylum.
- Not all children had up-to-date care plans on file and the quality of care plans was poor. Individualised interventions to support children's experience of trauma, separation and loss were not yet established in the centre. Improvements were required across all standards inspected.

Standard	Judgment
Theme 1: Child - centred Services	
Standard 4: Children's Rights	Non Compliant - Moderate
Theme 2: Safe & Effective Care	
Standard 5: Planning for Children and Young People	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 6: Care of Young People	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 7: Safeguarding and Child Protection	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 10: Premises and Safety	Non Compliant - Moderate
Theme 4: Leadership, Governance & Management	
Standard 1: Purpose and Function	Non Compliant - Moderate
Standard 2: Management and Staffing	Non Compliant - Moderate

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (Special Care Units)

OSV-0004220 (Gleann Alainn Special Care Unit) - inspection took place in July 2017

30 standards inspected: 10 compliant, 6 substantially compliant, 13 non-compliant (moderate) and 1 non-compliant (major). Major non-compliance was for standard 2.3 *The special care unit is homely and promotes the welfare, dignity and safety of each child, consistent with the provision of safety and security.*

- Previous inspection reports highlighted the unsuitability of the building and this inspection confirmed those findings.

- Inspection found a lot positives: children's rights were promoted; children were encouraged to participate in decision-making; care was provided by the staff team, specialist clinicians from the assessment, consultation and therapy service (ACTS), and a psychiatrist; children's health needs were assessed; education was valued; there were measures in place to ensure that children were safeguarded while living in the unit; systems in place to ensure that, if any physical intervention or restraint was used, this was notified appropriately, reviewed and that learning occurred as a result.
- Unsuitability of the building made it difficult for staff to manage behaviour that was challenging.
- There was a stable management team in place. Governance structures in place and a monitoring officer visited the unit regularly.
- No strategic and operational plan for the unit for 2017/2018 and there were a number of other areas where improvement was required. These included supervision and training, ensuring that all staff were qualified, ensuring that staff files contained all required documents and information, the tracking of outcomes for children, implementation of national policies, and the risk management system. Some records, including the centre register, were incomplete.

OSV-0004219 (Coovagh Special Care Unit) - inspection took place in July2017

30 standards inspected: 7 compliant, 2 substantially compliant, 15 non-compliant (moderate) and 6 non-compliant (major)

- The inspection found that children's rights were promoted and protected. Children received individualised care and support from staff in the unit and from members of the ACTS team. Education and the health and development of each child was promoted.
- Notwithstanding, a significant proportion of staff had not received up-to-date training in supporting positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing. Some care practices in the unit did not promote a positive approach to behaviour that challenges nor were they safe. These included needlessly locking doors throughout the unit and observing children via Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in lieu of directly engaging with children.
- Some but not all children were safe while living in the special care unit. Inspectors found that some children had absconded from the unit and placed themselves at significant risk. These concerns were escalated to the relevant social work department and a satisfactory response was subsequently received.
- Safeguarding measures were in place but not all staff working in the unit had An Garda Síochána (police) vetting.
- Children did not always have timely access to psychiatric services.
- Staff were not sufficiently supported, supervised and provided with up-to-date and necessary training.
- The living environment was not fit for the purpose.

- Information was not being used to plan and deliver the service. There were no formal methods: for monitoring the quality and safety of the programme of special care, for tracking and monitoring significant events to analyse patterns and to reduce the use of restrictive procedures and to consider outcomes for children to drive continuous improvement. A service development plan had not been developed for the unit for 2017.
- Management arrangements had not been adequately resourced as the unit had been operating without a dedicated unit manager and supporting management team for a significant period of time.
- Inspectors identified a number of other deficits including, oversight of complaints, children's meetings, recording, timely notification of significant events and staff training; no service level agreement with cleaning company who had been conducting periodic deep cleans of the unit; statement of was not up to date, nor were the suite of unit policies.
- Areas of non-compliance found in an inspection of the service in 2016 such as premises, recreational equipment, supervision of staff, auditing, risk management remained unchanged since that time. This resulted in a deterioration in the quality of service being provided in the unit.