Annual Review on the Adequacy of Child Care and Family Support Services Available – 2020

1 Referrals to Child Protection & Welfare Services

- **69,712** referrals in 2020*.
- Equivalent to about **6** for every **100** children living in Ireland
- **1** in **3** referrals was from An Garda Síochána – most common source of referrals
- **45% (31,024)** welfare concerns, **32% (22,050)** child protection concerns, **24% (16,638)** report type not available

2 Cases open to social work

- **21,143** open cases at the end of 2020; **3,684 (15%)** fewer than **2019**
- Equivalent to **1.8%** of the child population being assessed, or in receipt of a social work service
- **80% (16,904)** of open cases were allocated to a named social worker
- **4,239 (20%)** open cases awaiting allocation, a **20% (1,052)** reduction on 2019. Decreasing trend

3 Children "active" on the CPNS

- **939** children "active" on the CPNS at the end of 2020; **(63) 7%** more than **2019**
- All children "active" had an allocated social worker

4 National Out of Hours Service

2,281 referrals to the National Out of Hours Service in **2020**, **95 (4%)** more than **2019**

5 First time admissions to care**

- **637** came into care for the first-time in **2020**; **33 (5%)** fewer than **2019**. Decreasing trend.
- Equivalent to about **5/10,000** children under 18 years

6 Total admissions to care**

- **837**admissions to care in **2020**; **7** fewer than **2019**. Decreasing trend
- **53% (445)** of admissions were under a court order. **47% (392)** of admissions were voluntary (agreement with the parents/guardians). Decreasing trend
- Neglect is the most common reason for admission **(43%; 360)**

7 Children in care**

- **5,818** in care at the end of **2020**; **133 (2%)** fewer than **2019**. Decreasing trend.
- Equivalent to about **5/1,000** children under 18 years
- **92% (5,338)** of children in care were in foster care
- **93% (5,419)** children in care had and allocated social worker
- **96%** of children **6-15** years and **95%** of **16-17** year olds were in full-time education (in accordance with their care plan)

8 Discharges from care**

- **977** discharges from care in **2020**, **31** more than **2019**
- **53% (515)** of discharges were young people turning 18 years
- **47% (456)** of discharges were to home/extended family; **41% (397)** remaining with their foster family

9 Foster carers

- **4,035** foster carers on the panel of approved foster carers at the end of **2020**, **95 (2%)** fewer than **2019**. Decreasing trend.
- **226** foster carers approved in **2020**; **33 (17%)** more than **2019**
- More than **9** out of **10** foster carers had an allocated link (social worker)

10 Aftercare**

- **2,835** young persons/adults in receipt of aftercare services, at the end of **2020**; **159 (6%)** more than **2019**. Increasing trend
- **75% (1,612)** of **18-22** year olds in receipt of aftercare services were in education/accredited training
- **96% (2,068)** of **18-22** year olds in receipt of aftercare services had an aftercare plan
- **91% (1,953)** of young persons/adults assessed as needing an aftercare worker had an aftercare worker

11 Adoption Services

- **158** applications for assessment as adoptive parents in **2020**; **36 (19%)** fewer than **2019**. Fewest number for period **2017 – 2020**
- Most common application was for fostering to adoption **51 (32%)**. Number of applications for inter-country adoption decreasing.
- **196** children referred for adoption in **2020**; **17** more than **2019**

12 Family Support Services

- At least **31,267** children referred to family support services in **2020** with **17,156** children in receipt of family support services at year end
- Equivalent to about **3%** of children under **18 years**
- **72% (22,356)** of children referred to family support service in **2020** received a service.
- **2,287** *Meitheal* processes requested in **2020**, slight decrease **(43)** from a high of **2,330** in **2019**

13 Service for Separated Children Seeking International Protection

- **80** referrals in **2020**, **104 (56%)** fewer than **2019** and the fewest number since **2012**
- **51** children were placed in care in **2020**
- **64** children were in care at year end
- **108** young persons/adults were in receipt of aftercare services at year end

* The number of referrals for 2020 is the result of a new and improved methodology of capturing all of the need which is referred to us. For previous years, a different methodology was used and focused on the number of referrals that were deemed to require a social work response following screening by child protection and welfare services. Referrals requiring diversion to other early intervention or family support services that did not require social work intervention, as well as referrals requiring no further action following screening were not included. This new approach to capturing all of the need referred is part of our continuous improvement to inform our decisions on resources and ways of working. Capturing all of the need now provides an even greater account of activity and demand on child protection and welfare services.

**Excludes children in care under the Service for Separated Children Seeking International Protection.

TUSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency