



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Tusla - Child and Family Agency
Brunel Building
Heuston South Quarter
Dublin 8

MEMORANDUM

To : Regional Service Directors & Area Managers

From : Linda Creamer, Acting Chief Operations Officer

Date : 25th September 2018

Re : Voluntary Consent to the placement of Children in Care

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached letter from HIQA raising concerns in respect of “Voluntary Consent to the Placement of Children in the Care of Tusla”.

As you can see HIQA have raised concerns in respect of a significant number of issues around Voluntary Consent. For your convenience I have also attached the Practice Guidance issued in July 2017 and the supporting leaflet and forms. This guidance was issued and implemented in 2017 and it is concerning that a number of Areas have not fully implemented the guidance and/or have not ensured that files/NCCIS include the forms and information to reflect and evidence implementation.

Whilst I recognise that this is not the case in every Area, I would ask that you would review all cases where children are in the voluntary care of the Child and Family Agency to ascertain:

1. Are up to date voluntary consent forms held in the file/NCCIS record and are easily accessible?
2. That all voluntary consent forms are **up to date** and that they refer to the **Child and Family Agency and/or Tusla** and not the HSE or Health Board
3. That all voluntary consent forms **have a start and end date** (or date indicating an expected duration of the placement) **which should not exceed the statutory review date**.
4. **That any voluntary consent forms that have elapsed are immediately updated before 30 September 2019**
5. That all **records** or **minutes** of child in care reviews where a child is in the voluntary care of the child and family agency, Tusla **include a note of the review of the voluntary consent**.
6. Where there is no plan to reunify the child to the care of their parent(s) that a robust assessment of the alternatives has been explored and an appropriate plan put in place in line with 5.0 of the practice guidance.
7. If parents have died or are no longer contactable alternative arrangements **must** be considered and put in place.

The National Lead for alternative care will be in contact with you to collate the data from your review and to assist you (if required) to put in place a service improvement plan to address any challenges arising.

The Practice Guidance issued in July 2017 is now due for review and I have asked the National Lead to carry out this review in quarter one of 2020.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter and I look forward to receiving confirmation that all the outstanding issues have been addressed and where appropriate service improvement plans have been put in place.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Creamer".

Linda Creamer
Acting Chief Operations Officer