



Provider Assurance Report

Dublin South West / Kildare/ West Wicklow

Name of Service Area:	Dublin South West / Kildare / West Wicklow (DSW/K/WW)
OSV No:	4419 & 4420
Name of provider:	Tusla
Chief Operations Officer:	Mr. Jim Gibson
Date of Request:	6 December 2019
Date to be returned	3 February 2020

Assurance is required in the following area:

1. Unallocated Cases

Please outline how the unallocated cases project has impacted on the waiting list in DSW/K/WW.

Three additional social care posts were assigned to area as part of the national unallocated cases project. These posts were filled via transfer and as such experienced social care staff moved into the area to fill these posts.

The unallocated project has facilitated a review of the thresholds being implemented across the area. An area wide review of all open cases took place, and the priority and threshold level was reviewed and amended as appropriate. The result of this was that the number of unallocated cases of high priority were reduced and cases with a low priority were closed.

The Unallocated cases project facilitated discussions and planning around the use of resources across the area and a restructuring of the child protection and welfare pillar was agreed by the Senior Management team and is currently underway. This restructuring will ensure a better use of the current resources available to the area and will also ensure that we maximise the capacity of the area to allocate cases of a high priority.

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

The number of unallocated cases in **DSW/K/WW** in the Child Protection and Welfare Service by priority level,

High Priority	86
Medium Priority	590
Low Priority	313
Total:	989

Please note that while overall there has been a reduction in the number of unallocated intake and CPW cases within the area, the latest figures show an increase in the numbers of unallocated cases. The reason for this is that the area is currently implementing structural changes with regard to the organisational structure. This increase therefore is seen as only temporary and not in line with overall trend for area over 2019 and is as a result of cases being reallocated to different teams as part of the restructuring. As part of this exercise, work is taking place relating to data quality on NCCIS. The restructuring plan is due to be implemented in March 2020 and as such this temporary increase is only temporary.

The number of unallocated children in care as of the 31/12/2019

53 - a duty service is offered to children without an allocated social worker.

The means by which the COO is assured of the reduction in unallocated cases in **DSW/K/WW**

The COO is monitoring the measuring the pressure reports on a monthly basis. In addition to this, the regional service director providers report to the COO at 1:1 meetings and also at national meetings.

The COO is also assured by areas' implementation of the actions under the Child Protection and Welfare Strategy through reporting by areas/region with AIPs (area implementation plans). These reports are provided at regular intervals and report on implementation of key milestones under the strategy.

The CEO has also introduced a new performance conference approach whereby key performance data will be presented and responded to by each regional service director and relevant service director. The first of these conferences is being held on 5th February 2020. This aim of this approach is to improve performance across agency but also to provide a more systemic approach in viewing performance and ensuring other directorates support this also including finance, HR, Quality assurance and policy.

HIQA Governance Meetings have been established by the service director within the area and are held on a monthly basis. These are chaired by the Service Director and in advance of the meeting verification exercises are completed by Quality assurance. Under this process, significant organisational changes have been made to team structures to increase capacity of the intake service to respond to referrals.

Whether this project will be extended into 2020;

The national plan relating to unallocated cases ended in 2019 and the plan is not to continue this work via a specific national project. The plan moving forward is to use existing governance structures to oversee and govern the number of unallocated cases.

There are however actions that are continuing that originally commenced under the national unallocated cases project which includes:

- Review of vacancies within areas by national workforce planning manager
- Use of lean management approach at intake to ensure resources are being used as effectively as possible.

Both these actions are underway in DSW KWW. The work carried out by the national workforce planner has resulted in bespoke Social Work recruitment campaigns for the area and this will go out on a monthly basis for the area for the foreseeable future.

if so, the projected outcomes, including timelines of the project

Tusla national business plan 2020 has set a target that there will be a reduction of unallocated cases (including retrospective abuse cases) by 20% in 2020.

Assurance is required in the following area:

2. Recruitment/Resources

Please outline how the DSW/K/WW Service Area benefited from recruitment initiatives and the pilot of the workforce development plan:

DSW/K/WW Service Area has had a bespoke campaign for PQSW with interviews scheduled for 27th January 2020. The Bespoke Campaign specific to the area remains open to applicants with an interest in working specifically in this area. Interviews are ongoing over Q1 2020 with the view to appointing candidates into vacant posts and decreasing the number of vacant posts in the area.

Following initial action plan for bespoke campaigns for this area, HR/Tusla Recruit continue to work closely with the area to prioritise vacant posts and source candidates to fill identified vacancies.

An Agency Usage Review has resulted in agency conversions – a process to directly employ Agency Staff in the area. This has resulted in 16 agency staff accepting direct contracts of employment with Tusla with the majority assigned to posts within front door services. This exercise will add stability to the workforce and fill vacancies by direct employment.

A process to hire Pre-Registered Graduates pending their CORU Registration is currently being explored with an objective to engage graduates at the earliest date possible. DSW/K/WW Service Area will benefit from this process which is expected to be approved and implemented in Q2 2020.

A Comprehensive Review of Retention issues at the front door is currently work in progress to address staff retention challenges through investigating the current retention challenges at the front door in the 5 selected areas and preparing a retention proposal for action.

The scope of the review is to provide:

- Comprehensive analysis of retention initiatives and issues at front door in 5 areas
- Draft a Retention proposal to agree next steps/action plan

A Retention workgroup was established with representation from each area. Meetings discussed and documented retention related issues in all areas.

A staff survey was conducted the analysis of responses is currently work in progress. The final report is due to be completed by end Q1 2020. DSW/K/WW Service Area benefited from direct analysis of their retention issues which will result in a relevant action plan.

In addition to the above, a student sponsorship scheme has been launched for the Social Work training course in Maynooth NUIM. The purpose of this scheme is to ensure that those awarded this sponsorship will take up posts in areas such as DSW KWW where there are high staff vacancies. Interviews with students for this scheme took place in January 2020.

The regional service director has also met with both Maynooth NUIM and Tallaght (Technological University of Dublin) to develop strategic relationships with regard to encouraging students to see Tusla as an employer of choice on graduating.

DSW KWW are also very committed to taking students as means of supporting maintaining links with third level institutions and supporting students to consider Tusla as a career choice. Currently there are 13 students on placement in DSW KWW. As part of a recruitment initiative, all students receive ICT equipment (laptop and mobile phone) on their first day to create a positive first impression of the agency and to contribute to having a positive experience while on placement.

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

The outcome of the comprehensive review of resources at the 'front door'

A comprehensive review of vacancies was undertaken at the 'front door'.

The scope of the review included the:

- Comprehensive review of vacancies at the front door: to provide a comprehensive picture, area by area on vacancies, actions taken to date and problems experienced in filling these vacancies;
- Provision of step by step process for vacancy management for Area Teams (from vacancy identification, vacancy approval, through to appointment);
- Respond to specific recruitment risks escalated to Core Team and work with Service Directors to resolve specific recruitment issues, including bespoke campaigns;

- Commission the PMO to complete a lean management review of processes to fill existing vacancies from the moment staff hands in notice in existing post to post being filled.

Outcome:

A Comprehensive Review Report is in final draft. This provides an overview of baseline of resources at the front door and within the wider area. The actions taken date and the issues in filling vacancies has been documented and recommendations made to address issues noted. The review will result in an action plan for the area to address issues in filling vacant posts.

A step by step vacancy management process is available to the area to ensure correct processes are applied in filling vacancies.

HR and Tusla Recruit have responded directly to the recruitment needs for the area and prioritised actions with bespoke campaigns for the area and provision of an ongoing focus to fill vacancies in the area. The focus will continue to fill vacant posts in the area and work is on-going with management in the area to improve processes.

A Lean Management exercise has commenced this is expected to be completed in Q1 2020. This exercise will review of processes to fill existing vacancies from the moment staff hands in notice in existing post to post being filled. The objective is to provide an evidence driven understanding of the processes of filling of a position and to determine an optimal process for filling a vacancy in the future.

In addition to the above, detailed reports have been prepared relating to the demographic profile of the area. These include AIRO reports from NUIM regarding the counties in DSW KWW and also a summary area profile report. Tusla's Outcomes for Children hub also contains details relating to demographics of the area and key Tusla metrics. The service director uses this information to inform resource allocation across the region and also to support analysis regarding capacity of services to respond to service need.

The number of approved WTE posts in the Child Protection and Welfare Service

Please note that to date, all posts as they become vacant have been approved for filling and the turnaround for this approval takes place in a timely manner i.e 2 -3 days.

- 2 WTE PSWs for CPC (1 Interim PSW covering maternity)
- 2 WTE PSWs (CP&Welfare) (1 Interim PSW covering maternity leave)
- 9 WTE SWTLs (including 1 WTE Interim SWTL, 2 WTE maternity leave unable to fill)
- 2 WTE Senior Social Work Practitioners
- 30 WTE PQSWs (included in figure 8 Agency PQSWs, 1 WTE on unpaid leave unfilled, 1 maternity unfilled and 1 long-term sick leave which is covered)
- 10.8 WTE Social Care Workers (included in figure 3 Agency SCWs)
- 0.5 WTE Social Care Leader

The number of new posts approved since September 2019 (if relevant)

3 WTE Social Care Workers new budget posts approved on the 13/9/19 as part of the national unallocated project.

Other additional posts approved in 2019 was a dedicated FCC chair post; a Grade VI foster care coordinator post, a new PSW post for fostering (dedicated post) and a post for after care manager.

The number of approved WTE posts in the foster care service

3.8 WTE SWTLs (including 1 Interim SWTL)
2.5 WTE Senior Social Work Practitioners
13.4 WTE PQSWs (including 2 Agency PQSWs, 1 long-term sick leave unfilled)
0.5 WTE Social Care Leader
2 Social Care Workers (1 WTE on maternity leave unfilled)

The number of posts filled in the foster care service since September 2019

1 WTE Senior Social Work Practitioner (Currently in Interim SWTL position)
1 WTE PQSW

The number of filled posts in the Child protection and Welfare Service since September 2019

1 WTE Interim PSW for CPC covering maternity leave
1 WTE Interim PSW covering maternity leave
1 WTE Interim SWTL
2 WTE Senior Social Work Practitioners (1 WTE currently Interim SWTL on CIC Team covering maternity leave)
2 WTE Social Care Workers

A breakdown of vacancies per function (Child Protection and Welfare Service and Foster Care Service)as of 31/12/2019

2 WTE (CP&Welfare) Temporary SWTL (maternity leaves)5 WTE (CP&Welfare) PQSW (3 permanent, 2 temporary)
8 WTE (CP&Welfare) Senior Social Work Practitioners (7 permanent, 1 Temporary)
2 WTE (CP&Welfare) Social Care Workers

Specific initiatives employed to ensure effective use of resources

The area has reviewed the resources available and a major restructuring is underway across the area. This restructuring is focused on increasing the capacity of intake to respond to new referrals in a timely way. Evidence from areas across the country is that with the implementation of the national approach to practice that less number of cases go onto child protection and welfare teams and as such resources can be moved from these teams to the intake service.

Assurance is required in the following area:

3. PPFS and pathways to community based early intervention

Please outline how children and families in **DSW/K/WW** benefited from the review and strengthening of PPFS and pathways to community based early intervention.

From January to December 2019, 1,113 children's referrals were presented in RED & Comhar, of which 80.6% of these were offered support by PPFS & partner agencies. The 1,113 referrals do not include the referrals by direct access to Child & Family Support Network co-ordinators, Domestic Violence support or Family Support, and Meitheal. Furthermore, the statistics of children and families accessing family support services from Tusla provided or Tusla funded services (Family Support Metrix) evidence the increase in these referrals and interventions. In the period July to December 2018, 1,113 children were referred to Tusla provided or Tusla funded family support services in Dublin South West Kildare West Wicklow.

For the same period of July – December 2019, 2,230 children were referred to the Tusla provided or Tusla funded family support services, a 100% increase of children referred to family support services across the continuum of early intervention, prevention supports to high prevention supports to children listed on the CPNS or in the care of Tusla. See table of comparison of 2018 Quarter 4 referrals compared to Quarter 4 2019 referrals to family support services.

The Total Number of Children referred to Family Support Services By:	July to December 2018	July to December 2019
Tusla social work	251	836

Other Tusla officers	44	142
HSE	25	192
Gardai	2	14
Self (Child themselves)	164	65
Parent	385	517
Family Member	14	32
GP	24	52
Voluntary organisation	85	121
School	76	144
Other	59	205
Total	1130	2320

The above results were achieved through a number of specific planned actions as part of the PPFS Work Plan 2019:

1. Increased profile of PPFS and the family support services funded by Tusla, through presentation at induction days for new social work staff, participation by CFSN Co-ordinators at SW team meetings every month, and PPFS management sitting at Child Protection & Welfare pillar management meeting, Case Review meetings and Area Management meetings
2. Increase to RED meeting duration and streamlining of RED Process, as described below in RED process.
3. Participation of PPFS management and team in Signs of Safety practice intensives for Intake and IA, ensuring shared vision amongst both PPFS and Child Protection of what right support there is in our area for families in need of support
4. Movement of personnel to specific Domestic Violence Support post in Kidlare West Wicklow, to mirror existing support in Dublin South West. The Domestic Violence Support Service assisted victims of domestic violence in families with 351 children from July to December 2019 (186 in DSW and 165 in KWW).

The graph below outlines the referral types for the 351 children referred to the Domestic Violence Support, of which 273 or 78% came from Tusla social work services.

		DV - DSW	DV - KWW	TOTAL
The number of Children referred to Family Support Services (FSS) by source of referral during the reporting period		186	165	351
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by TUSLA Social Work during the reporting period	115	158	273
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by other TUSLA Officer/s during the reporting period	0	0	0
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by HSE Officer/s during the reporting period	3	0	3
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by An Gardaí Síochána during the reporting period	8	0	8
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by Self Referral during the reporting period	11	4	15
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by Parent/ Guardian during the reporting period	0	0	0
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by Other Family Member during the reporting period	0	0	0
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by a GP during the reporting period	18	0	18
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by a Voluntary Agency during the reporting period	31	3	34
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by an Anonymous source during the reporting period	0	0	0
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by Schools during the reporting period	0	0	0
CF3001	The number of children referred to FSS by Other sources during the reporting period	0	0	0
				351

A third post has been created for another Domestic Violence Support in Dublin South West, supported by all Senior Management Team in DSW KWW such is the demand for this service.

In 2019, new pathways to divert children and families to services were focussed on, such as the therapeutic service in Curragh FRC, a pilot therapeutic hub project funded by Tusla national office. The local area also in a separate funded process recommended that an additional family support work post would be based in the Curragh FRC.

These parallel initiatives have resulted in potentially strong pathways for children and families in need of support in Mid Kildare to access this in a client centred and supported way. In December 2019, 46% of referrals to the Therapeutic service in the Curragh FRC came from Tusla social work service & PPFs. The Senior Manager PPFs, Area Manager and Intake Social Work management in Kildare West Wicklow have also commenced negotiations with a funded service to ensure increased diversions of families in need of support to this service. These negotiations will continue into 2020, with the hope for increased use of this service and impact on our cases awaiting support in our area.

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

Use of Meitheal process

In Quarter 4 2018, there were 6 Child and Family Support Network areas active and 4 planned. There were 21 Meitheal requests during the period of July to December 2018. At the same period in 2019, July – December 2019, there were 9 Child and Family Support Network areas active, one unable to activate due to post vacancy and one planned. Meitheal requests for the same period in 2019 had increased to 75, more than a 3-fold increase in the same period.

This increase has been facilitated by increased resourcing within PPFS, namely 2 new Senior Child & Family Support Network Co-ordinators and 3 new Child & Family Support Network Co-ordinators in 2019, which saw the Child & Family Support Network areas of Tallaght East, North Kildare, Naas Clane Kilmeage & Derrinturin, Jobstown Kiltipper and Dublin 12 resourced.

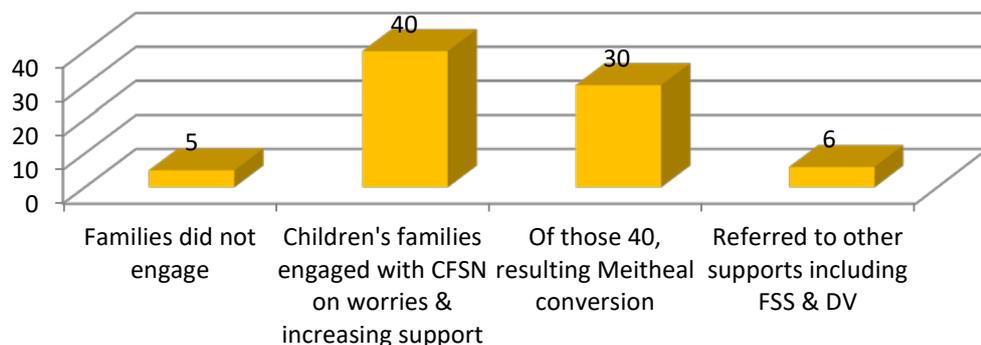
Furthermore, outside of the Meitheal process and signposting exercises carried out by CFSN Meitheal co-ordinators, the Local Area Responses undertaken by the CFSN co-ordinators on named families were tracked, either through RED, Comhar or direct access to CFSN Co-ordinators. From July – December 2019, 287 children and their families were offered support through Local Area Response by CFSN Co-ordinators, 146 in DSW and 121 in KWW.

The chart below outlines the National Metric Return for the two CFSN teams in the area, and the breakdown of referral types for the 267 children, of which 204 came from Tusla Social Work.

	CFSN DSV	CFSN KWW	TOTAL
The number of Children referred to Family Support Services (FSS) by source of referral during the reporting period	146	121	267
The number of children referred to FSS by TUSLA Social Work during the reporting period	132	72	204
The number of children referred to FSS by other TUSLA Officer/s during the reporting period	0	4	4
The number of children referred to FSS by HSE Officer/s during the reporting period	0	6	6
The number of children referred to FSS by An Gardaí Síochána during the reporting period	0	0	0
The number of children referred to FSS by Self Referral during the reporting period	4	0	4
The number of children referred to FSS by Parent/ Guardian during the reporting period	0	10	10
The number of children referred to FSS by Other Family Member during the reporting period	0	0	0
The number of children referred to FSS by a GP during the reporting period	0	5	5
The number of children referred to FSS by a Voluntary Agency during the reporting period	5	8	13
The number of children referred to FSS by an Anonymous source during the reporting period	0	0	0
The number of children referred to FSS by Schools during the reporting period	5	16	21
The number of children referred to FSS by Other sources during the reporting period	0	0	0
			267

Analysis of a sample of 56 children diverted to Child & Family Support Network Co-ordinators between May and October 2019 is outlined below. Of the 56 children referred, 40 children's families successfully engaged with CFSN with 30 Meitheals resulting from these engagements. This demonstrated a 71% successful engagement rate in these cases, evidencing the strong capacity of CFSN Co-ordinators to engage with families diverted from intake into successful supports.

Referrals Diverted to CFSN KWW: Outcome of Intervention



Implementation of national RED process

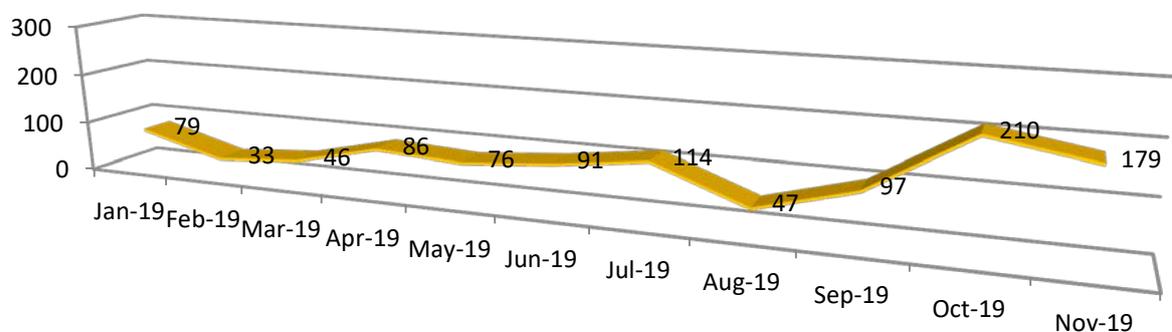
There is a regional structure in place in DML which is chaired by the regional implementation manager for PPFS (RIM) who reports directly to the regional service director. In 2019 the regional service director attended this forum to emphasise the priority of the RED structure and also to ensure that performance with regard to Meitheal data improved across DML. In addition to this, to support sharing of learning, oversight of quality of RED processes and ensure consistency of approach, the Regional RIM for DML attended RED meetings in DSW KWW in Quarter 4 2019. Reports were presented at the area governance and oversight meetings and these were very positive with regard to these structures in the area.

The first priority on the work plan of PPFS in 2019 was the pathways to support for children and families, including those diverted from Social Work, arising from Tusla Corporate plan Child Protection & Welfare Strategy. Under this Work, a number of key performance indicators were set, including:

- Strong interface between PPFS & Intake Social Work Service for diversion of referrals to appropriate pathways of support, with activity targets of RED Meetings in both DSW & KWW increased in time length and in efficiency of the system behind it, and co-production of Working Relationship Document 'No Wrong Door' between Intake & PPFS.
- Strong interface between PPFS & Social Work teams for step down of referrals from Social Work to appropriate pathways of support, through the activities of Information sharing sessions with Child Protection & Alternative Care teams on PPFS, CFSN, RED, at team level and departmental level, CFSN Co-ordinators to attend team meetings in Child Protection and Welfare Teams for short slot to build connections and pathways.

All of the above activities were completed in 2019, with the result of a significant increase in the numbers of families diverted through RED and Comhar in our area, as evidenced above. Please see below a graph of the referrals to Red and Comhar for 2019 in our area.

Referrals of Children Presented to RED & Comhar DSW KWW



Following presentation at RED, the PPFS team has 5 support services across the entire area which referrals can be diverted to:

- Domestic Violence Support,
- Local Area Response by Child & Family Support Network Co-ordinators,
- signposting support by CFSN Co-ordinators,
- Meitheal and finally
- Family Support Service.

During the period July to December 2019, the Domestic Violence service within Tusla received 351 referrals to their service, of which 78% were directly from Tusla Social Work services. The Child & Family Support Network Co-ordinators across the area were involved in 267 Local Area Responses to families between July – December 2019, separate to activities of signposting with agencies and Meitheal requests. Of these 267 Local Area Responses, 76% were from Tusla Social Work services. During the same period, the Family Support Service across the area received 49% of their referrals from Tusla Social Work. These percentages include those referrals diverted through RED and Comhar.

Our service has also collaborated with the Family Welfare Conference service in Tusla, who have attended our RED meetings, and taken direct referrals of possible family welfare conference cases from this forum.

The Meeting length was increased across the area, and full day RED meetings took place every month in KWW from Quarter 4 2019.

As outlined above, RED and Comhar are embedded strongly across both DSW and KWW, with 1,113 children referred through RED and Comhar in the area in 2019.

Further efficiencies in the system behind RED and Comhar were achieved through the streamlining of the business support role supporting the processes, improving quality in data recording, communication with referrers, and throughput of cases. Furthermore, a significant amount of work has been put into the streamlining of the data recording in PPFS with the development of a new PPFS Master file data base encompassing all aspects of PPFS work with families outside of Meitheal (which has its own national data base) and development of Shared Server usage for the services within PPFS to record its work, outside of NCCIS.

The collaboration of PPFS with Social Work in the Signs of Safety Practice Intensive sessions has further improved quality in RED and Comhar, especially through the attention to language, jargon avoidance, and mapping of harm for referrals discussed, especially in the area of domestic violence.

Assurance is required in the following area:

4. Retrospective Cases

Please outline how the national service improvement project for the management of retrospective cases has impacted on the management of retrospective cases in DSW/K/WW Area.

Please include in your response:

the number of retrospective cases awaiting allocation by priority level as of 31/12/2019

Number of retrospective cases awaiting allocation by priority level as of 31/12/2019

High: 54

Medium: 67

Low: 109

Overall total: 230

In October 2019, a regional PSW for CASP (and retrospective abuse cases) was appointed to the DML. Currently this PSW reports directly to the Regional Service Director. There will be however 2 additional General Manager posts filled on 17th February 2020 to support the service director in oversight and governance across region (which will include regional teams such as the CASP/retrospective team).

There are currently 5 social workers assigned to this team. There is an additional SWTL post also approved and currently with recruitment for filling. In addition to this, additional training is scheduled for March 2020 relating to risk assessments. This training will be completed by regional staff on CASP/retrospective team but also to staff across areas.

A draft SOP has been developed relating to the interface between local intake teams and the regional team. This SOP is currently with local areas for feedback and will be finalised in March 2020.

Since the regional PSW took up her post, there has been a review of all unallocated retrospective cases open to the area and ongoing prioritisation of retrospective cases. From this work, it is clear that there are issues relating to data quality and the count often included both the person subject to abuse allegations and also the complainant. This has as such over inflated the numbers of unallocated cases. Work is currently taking place to provide an accurate number relating to the actual number of unallocated cases which is anticipated to be less. The area has assigned a business support work to support this task.

There is a national implementation plan in place relating to the implementation of CASP (including retrospective abuse referrals). There is a governance group established to oversee the implementation of this policy. An additional 10 posts have been allocated nationally to support the implementation of CASP.

Assurance is required in the following area:

5. Audit of Garda Notifications.

Please outline what follow up has been completed with An Garda Síochána in the DSW/K/WW Area in relation to the audit / review of notifications by An Garda Síochána, completed 08/07/19.

As per above for 2.2.10

Local Management Team continue to take place (in line with Garda/Tusla joint protocol). There are 4 meetings across the area on a monthly basis. These meetings support the tracking and oversight of Garda notifications until an outcome is reached.

Joint Protocol Meetings with An Garda Síochána happen on a quarterly basis within the area.

A new SOP has been devised for LMT and this is currently being implemented across the area.

The regional Child protection and welfare forum has also issued a practice memo to ensure that all PSWs and staff are clear that Garda notifications need to be completely at the point that abuse is suspected. Within the Intake structure, the monthly audits that are completed by the intake PSW also includes assuring that Garda notifications are completed when there is a suspicion of abuse. In addition to this, the CPC chairs are vigilant to ensure that Garda notifications have been required as completed. The system for oversight of allegations against foster carers also ensures that Garda notifications have been completed as required (and the FCC chair also supports this as additional oversight and governance).

Assurance is required in the following area:

6. Supports/training initiatives to staff who complete initial assessment and safety planning.

Please outline what supports have been put in place to support good practice and consistency in approach in relation to the completion of initial assessments and safety planning.

SOS intensives across the area in respect of Initial Assessment and Safety planning in January 2019.

SOS intensives across the area in respect of Preliminary Enquiry and safety planning at preliminary enquiry stage in October 2019.

There were SOS Safety planning workshops held in quarter 3 of 2019.

Sharon Gorey is providing SOS Learning and Development to staff across the area and is supporting staff with individual cases.

The area has identified two Team Leaders to champion SOS across the area, who were part of 2 intensive workshops in 2019 and who will lead out on intensives across the area from 2020.

Staff are being facilitated to attend the two day and five-day practice leader training, and all call back days.

In October 2019, staff were facilitated to attend a call back day that facilitated a review of the learning in SOS for two years from 2017.

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

Specific supports/training initiatives

- NVR (non violent resistance –relating to child to parent violence)
- SOS
- NCCIS
- Inductions
- Child and Youth Participation

In addition to this, there are 3 regional forums that support consistency relating to implementation of policies/procedures and sharing of learning. These are:

- Alternative care forum
- Child Protection and welfare forum
- PPFS regional meeting

The area managers and regional service director also meet on a monthly basis to discuss key national actions/initiatives so that the region aims to implement/progress these in a standardised way and also to support areas in doing so.

How you are assured of the impact of these initiatives on practice and outcomes for children

The following are assurances relating to practice and outcomes for children:

- Investing in Children awards- 4 awards across the area in 2019.
- QA- Audit of use of SOS- draft report has been issued and evidences the use of SOS to the end of initial assessment in excess of 90% of cases.
- Increased young peoples' participation at CPC's.
- Regional PPFs implementation feedback to service director on use of RED in area and positive work taking place to divert families and support them accessing a timelier service.
- Please note that work will also be carried out in Q3 to seek feedback from key referrers into intake following restructuring process.
- The HR manager for region has been working closely with the Area manager and Principal social workers to support staff performance and address it when it presents. This includes managing probation period and also ensuring performance plans are in place if required.

Assurance is required in the following area:

7. Review of current service delivery model

Please provide an update in relation to this review:

Service planning day for Senior Area Management took place in Sept 2019. The regional service director attended this as part of a review of the area and key organisational changes were agreed on this date. This includes increasing the intake staff allocation within the area and the movement of the 3 fostering teams under 1 PSW. These planned changes are underway with the aim that they will be implemented by March 2020. It is envisaged however that it will be Q3 and Q4 before the impact of these changes will be fully evidenced.

Other improvements taking place are:

- Increased allocation of Children in Care in area
- Increased number of children with an up to date care plan and review
- Statutory visits have increased to children in care.
- Conducting quarterly meetings with all children in care team leaders to ensure governance of care plans, statutory visits and reviews.
- The number of unallocated cases did reduce in DSW KWW with a particular focus being on reducing the number of high priority unallocated cases. Overall there has

been a downward trend. As outlined above, there has been an increase recently but this is as a result of work taking place in the area for the restructuring of teams/staff.

A third fostering team was established in late 2018. The fostering services has further developed with the creation of a PSW specifically for fostering.

There is a dedicated fostering committee chair for the area now and the plan is that in Q3 of 2020, a new committee will be established so that there is no longer a shared committee with DSC.

There is dedicated Foster Care Review team to ensure governance oversight and implementation of Foster Care Reviews across the area.

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

The key findings of the review

Restructuring ongoing and updates as above. As outlined above, it is envisaged that it will be Q3 and Q4 that real impact of the restructuring will be evidenced. As usual with key structural changes, performance data is likely to show changes/fluctuations during this period.

What measures have been put in place to date to address the findings of the review

Review took place and plan in place relating to the organisational structure as already outlined above.

The expected impact on service delivery arising out of the findings of the review in DSW/K/WW

The planned changes following review of service delivery expect that, there will be:

- Lower number of high priority cases unallocated.
- More timely responses provided to children and families.
- Higher levels of referrals to PPFS
- Reduced waiting time and improved response time for children from the point of referral to completion of Initial Assessment
- Increased implementation of SOS across the CPW pillar.
- Greater compliance with national CPW standards.

Review of Service Level Agreement with focus Ireland for outsourced aftercare support, this commenced in 2019 and is ongoing. This is being completed with DSC.

Review of the service delivery model for FAIM.

Assurance is required in the following area:

8. Specific Area initiatives as outlined in the Service Improvement Plan for DSW/K/WW:

Key changes being implemented include the following:

Child Protection and Welfare Teams:

Current configuration of CPW teams is 2 Intake Teams (1 KWW and 1 DSW) and 6 Patch Teams (3 KWW and 3 DSW). The new configuration of these 8 teams will change to 4 Intake and Duty Teams (2 KWW and 2 DSW) and 4 CPW Patch Teams (2 KWW and 2 DSW).

The role of the 4 Intake teams will be expanded to Intake *and Duty* and will include screening, preliminary enquiry and initial assessment. Staffing on these teams will include 1 Team Leader, 2 Senior Practitioners, 3 Social Workers and 2 Social Care Workers (Total 8 staff).

We also hope to align 4 Child and Family Support Network Co-coordinators (CFSN'S) to each of the Intake and Duty Teams.

The new system also places increased emphasis on joint working between PPFS and Intake/Duty Teams and on ensuring enhanced pathways for diversions for relevant cases through the RED and COMHAR processes. Current resources within PPFS will also need to be reviewed in conjunction with Caroline Sheehan Senior Manager and this work will be ongoing.

The 4 CPW Patch Teams (2 KWW and 2 DSW) will manage cases going for CPC, cases on the CPNS and on Family Support Plans. The process of how children in care will be managed on these teams is yet to be finalised and requires further consideration. Staffing on these teams will include 1 Team Leader, 1 Senior Prac, 2 social workers (3 if current resources allow) and 1 Social Care Worker (5/6 Staff per team).

Children in Care and Fostering Teams:

The key change for Children in Care and Fostering teams is that the current configuration with 2 PSW posts for CIC/Fostering will be increased to 3. The new structure will include; 1 PSW for Fostering (KWW/DSW) managing 3 fostering teams, 1 PSW for CIC KWW (managing 3 CIC teams) and 1 PSW for CIC DSW (4 CIC teams). One of the CIC PSW's will also take on management responsibility for Aftercare. A business case for this additional PSW post (which has been made up from current resources) has been approved and hope to have this post filled by end of March 2020

Please clearly provide the following data/information:

The implementation of self-audits and how the findings of these audits have contributed to service improvement

- Self-Audit for CPNS in currently taking place
- Self-Audit for national quality assurance framework is ongoing
- Self-Audits for Garda Notifications, monthly audits by PSW of intake records
- Self-Audits of SOS implementation
- Supervision Audit
- Caseload management
- TNA analysis
- Quarterly governance meetings in CIC and fostering in respect of Statutory requirements.
- Audit of staffing at monthly staffing meeting
- Monthly review of area's risk register.
- Audit's of NTK's

The implementation of the area learning plan

The region has 3 established forums to support learning and quality improvement. These are:

- CPW forum
- Alternative care forum
- PPFS regional Forum

In addition to this, 2 General manager posts have been created by the regional service director to support learning and also increase capacity for governance and oversight.

Finally, within the area, there are pillar meetings in place to ensure learning and good communication relating to changes and service improvements.

Area staff complete training needs analysis which are submitted to workforce learning and development who compile a regional training plan.

Furthermore there are 2 Training and Development officers in DML who support implementation of the Signs of Safety as national approach to practice.

The effective use of caseload management

Case Load Management is implemented across the area and all workers have had updated training. Where caseloads remain unmanageable for three months or more this is escalated to the PSW and Area Manager and safe guarding plans are put in place to support teams in managing, unmanageable workloads.

Team Leader workloads are monitored via supervision.

Short term measures are used to balance workloads across the area where specific concerns re caseloads are identified via caseload management.

There is a national governance group in place to oversee implementation of the management tool and reports are made nationally in relation to this.

The timely completion of notifications of suspected abuse to An Garda Síochána

- Completed at Intake, Reviewed by CPC chair.
- SOP supporting timely completion of notifications at intake.
- All notifications reviewed at LMT on a monthly basis to ensure timely completion and identify and address issues as they arise.
- Regional CPW forum issued a memo relating to requirement to complete notifications at point when there is suspicion of abuse.
- Monthly intake PSW audits includes that Garda notifications are done when required.