



IASW

Irish Association of Social Workers  
Cumann na hÉireann um Oibrithe Sóisialta

**PRESS RELEASE 14<sup>TH</sup> July 2010 – for immediate release.**

***Social Workers welcome HIQA reports, demand an end to inequalities in service provision and applaud evidence of good practice.***

Following the publication today of the HIQA reports into the fostering Service of the HSE, Dublin North, Dublin North Central and Dublin North West on the inspection of foster care in 3 Dublin areas, Declan Coogan, spokesperson for the Irish Association of Social Workers and lecturer with the Masters in Social Work Programme at NUI Galway stated that social workers welcome the findings of the reports. He stated that the reports highlight again the failure to provide adequate and safe care of the children by not allocating a social worker to every child in care. He noted that the report into the children in foster care for Dublin North West shows that 47% of the children did not have an allocated social worker, while the figure for Dublin North Central was 30% of the children placed in foster care. He said that social workers welcome the view of the Chief Executive of HIQA, Dr. Tracey Cooper, that this situation is "serious and unacceptable".

Social workers continue to be concerned, he added, by the fact that vulnerable children continue to be placed by the HSE in the care of people who have not been fully assessed and fully approved. Social workers pointed out that this situation is a reflection of the lack of priority given by the HSE to fully resource social work services so that fostering social workers, for example, can undertake comprehensive and timely assessments. The HIQA report also found, in common with the experiences of many social workers, that there was no strategic planning of foster care by HSE senior management.

It is also noteworthy that the HIQA reports identified good practice and included the views of children and foster carers who stated that where cases were allocated there was evidence of good practice and the allocated social workers "were committed and dedicated professionals, who worked in complex and stressful situations but held as their main concern the welfare of the children on their case load".

Coogan said that social workers again call for the full resourcing of Social Work Teams with social work, administrative and other support positions. Given that

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children and families living within 10 miles of each other have very different experiences of the foster care system, social workers demand that the HSE also to address the inequality of service provision by allocating a social worker to every child in care.

**ENDS.**

**For further information, please contact**

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