

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Annual HIQA Review  
**2014**

## INSPECTIONS

111 across the different services including 75 disability inspections

## CHILDREN

6,463 children in care in Ireland.  
6,011 - foster care  
325 - residential  
127 - other

**202**

sought

views

Children's

## CONCERN

HIQA remains concerned that children's safety and welfare is put at additional risk because they aren't receiving the required social work interventions

**26**

Notifications of deaths of children in care or known to child services

**3 SERIOUS INCIDENTS**

High numbers of children waiting on an initial assessment or allocation to a social worker

## NOPOLICIES

specifically on retrospective allegations of organised and institutional abuse

**67**

Pieces of unsolicited information

40,000 children were referred to the Child and Family Agency child protection and welfare services in 2014

## CHILD PROTECTION

Inspectors found examples of prompt responses to immediate risks to children

Referring families to early interventions services was prioritised, however delays in referrals

In areas inspected, children did not know how to make a complaint

In one area, inspectors found 15 children at risk of ongoing harm who didn't have an allocated social worker

**79 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

## FOSTER CARE SERVICES

### STATUTORY SERVICES

- children were well looked after by caring considerate foster carers
- children were well cared for and their needs identified
- inequity in child care services depending on the area
- a number of relative carers' assessments were not completed in time, potentially placing children at risk (up to 3 years)
- challenges placing children with families from similar backgrounds

**69 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

### PRIVATE SERVICES

- rights of children were promoted, valued and respected
- children were involved in planning for their futures
- the quality of the service provided to children was good
- no robust quality assurance systems
- significant improvement is needed to identify and manage organisational risk

**9 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

## RESIDENTIAL CENTRES

In many centres, quality of child-centred practices was high

Children were well cared for by dedicated and committed staff

**47 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Aftercare services for children leaving centres were not equal

27% of services not always able to manage children's behaviour

Children were admitted to centres though their needs exceeded staff skills

One service moved premises due to fire safety concerns raised by HIQA

## SPECIAL CARE UNITS

Children well looked after and staff had a good understanding of children's rights

Children had access to advocacy and guardian ad litem services

In one unit children were routinely searched instead of searches being based on risk-assessment

Some restrictive practices were still over-used, such as single separation

In one unit improvement needed in medication management practices and individual risk-assessments

**15 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

## DETENTION SCHOOLS

Primary care needs were met but consultation with children was poor

Not all children had a restrictive plan and not all restrictive practices used as a last resort

Children were not always safe due to poor practice in management of behaviour and medication

Some children were in single separation to help manage staff shortages

**9 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

**492 ACTIONS REQUIRED**

## DISABILITY SERVICES

96 notifications received including 34 allegations of abuse

2 notices of proposal to cancel registration were issued due to concerns about the fitness of the provider to provide safe care to children

Good practice in relation to children's rights, dignity and consultation

Management of challenging behaviour affected the individual rights of some children

Sources:

Annual report of the regulatory activity of the Health Information and Quality Authority: Children's Services 2014  
Read the press release  
Information correct at 22 June 2015

www.hiqa.ie