

10 March 2022

To: **All Local Authorities**

Re: **Motion of Westmeath County Council**

A Chara,

At the recent meeting of Westmeath County Council held on 24 January 2022, the following resolution was passed, and it was agreed to circulate it to all Local Authorities for your attention:

Cllr. Emily Wallace:

“There are 82 children with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus currently requiring urgent Orthopaedic intervention.

This was brought to the attention of the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly’s in December 2020 (1).

However, no action has been instigated by the Minister to resolve this matter and these children continue to deteriorate.

Lack of surgical intervention has caused their limbs and bodies to become deformed and maimed. Some of these children legs are no so badly affected that the soles of their feet permanently rub together causing open sores and bleeding.

Children who have the ability to walk are losing or have lost that ability due to the absence of timely surgical management. Others who are manual wheelchair users, due to the same issue are unable to self-propel themselves effectively leaving them immobile.

The lack of timely surgical intervention means that effectively these children end up requiring more complex surgeries and failing that amputation of limbs.

I am calling on the County Council to write to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly and fast track these children for surgical review as a matter of urgency.

We also wish to call on the Minister for Health to ensure that provision of services is made to Disabled Children within elective Hospital settings as well as acute Hospital settings to avoid a repeat of this situation in the future.”

I would be grateful if you would bring the contents of this letter to the Elected Members at the next meeting of the Local Authority.

Mise le meas,



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