



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Seirbhísí Míchumais Náisiúnta
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15
Áras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,
Caladh an Treoigh,
Luimneach.

Office of the Head of Operations,
National Disability Services
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park,
Castletroy,
Limerick.

8th March 2024

Deputy John Lahart,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: john.lahart@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Lahart,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 8417/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if he can provide any information on funding that may be available for providers of early intervention services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs)

In line with the Progressing Disability Services model, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the 0 – 18 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) rather than to a dedicated early intervention team or school age team. 91 CDNTs are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work and others. The team works closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child's and family's own priorities.

Children and their families have access to a range of services and supports of the CDNT according to their individual needs. This includes universal, targeted and specialist supports, such as individual therapeutic intervention and access to specialist consultation and assessment when needed. Supports will be provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.



The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for 45,741 children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow.

Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People was approved by the HSE Board on July 28th and launched by the Government and the HSE on Tuesday 24th October 2023.

The Roadmap is a targeted Service Improvement Programme to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for all children with complex needs as a result of a disability and their families. It sets out the overall aim for Children's Disability Services, provided by the HSE and its partner agencies, that for every child to have a childhood of inclusive experiences where they can have fun, learn, develop interests and skills, and form positive relationships with others in a range of different settings.

The Roadmap also establishes a clear, robust governance structure at national level to drive the delivery of integrated Services between Disabilities, Primary Care, CAMHS and Tusla at local level, providing the critical building blocks for service integration for the benefit of children and families. Fundamental to this is the implementation of the Primary Care, Disabilities, CAMHS Joint Protocol and National Access Policy by Primary Care, Disabilities and CAMHS jointly for all children with disabilities.

With regard to funding, the Roadmap actions will optimise the use of existing budgets including time-related savings whilst additional funding requirements outlined below is progressed through the Estimates and budgetary processes.

2023 Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €11m (Budget 2023) to implement the Special Schools initiative• Additional €11.5m to implement the Waiting List Initiative to provide diagnostic assessments for those children on waiting lists	2024 Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €6.0m for additional 78 WTE paediatric posts to Primary Care CHNs to build service capacity to meet the needs of children with disabilities with non-complex need• Funding to drive the Roadmap Service Improvement Programme<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Service Improvement Lead• 9 CHO Service Improvement Leads
2025 Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2025), half year costs*• €12.5m for 300 Therapy Assistant posts*	2026 Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2025), full year costs*• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2026) half year costs* (FYC requires additional 12.55m in 2027)

* This is a critical part of a two and half year commitment over 2023 – 2026 to enhancing the staffing levels on CDNTs to meet the needs of children and families.

Childrens Disability Services Grant Scheme.

Additional funding has been provided to Childrens Disability Services under a new grant scheme. The closing date for applications was Monday 20th November 2023.

It is important to note that the Children's Disability Services Grant Fund was open to organisations, including community groups and service providers and aims to support children who are on a waiting list for Children's Disability Network Team services.

There was a huge response from voluntary and community groups and private agencies, with almost 500 applications for funding, ranging from proposals for several thousand euro to larger projects seeking in excess of one million euro over three years.

A panel is assessing all applications based on the following criteria:

- Quality and coherence of proposal;



- Contribution to wellbeing of children and families
- Potential lasting impact
- Capacity and sustainability of providers to deliver person-centred services and comply with standards
- Value for money

Due to a significantly larger number of submission received for the Children's Disability Services Grant Scheme than anticipated, the evaluation process has taken a lot longer to complete. It is now in its final stage and applicants will be duly notified of the outcome.

Yours Sincerely,

Bernard O'Regan

Bernard O'Regan
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations

