



**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.

11<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Deputy Bernard Durkan,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [bernard.durkan@oireachtas.ie](mailto:bernard.durkan@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Durkan,

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 9911/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the extent to which children with disabilities can expect to receive adequate care and attention and access to services now and in the future; the degree to which his Department has identified issues of interest in this regard; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

**HSE Response**

**National Access Policy**

The National Policy on Access to Services for Children & Young People with Disability & Developmental Delay ensures that children are directed to the appropriate service based on the complexity of their presenting needs i.e. Primary Care for non-complex functional difficulties and Children's Disability Network Teams for complex functional difficulties. Children with disabilities may access supports from a Children's Disability Network Team or from Primary Care or from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) depending on the complexity of their needs.

**Childrens' Disability Services**

91 Children's Disability Network Teams (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.



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. However, there are significant challenges for CDNTs including:

- Significant staffing vacancies
- Growth in numbers of children with complex need
- Growth in demand for Assessment of Need, diverting further resources away from interventions.

### **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, 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 includes a robust suite of 60 actions, including 21 on CDNT Retention and Recruitment targets, many of which are now in train.

The document: *Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People* can be accessed at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/disability/roadmap-for-service-improvement-2023-2026.pdf>

### **Roadmap Governing Structures:**

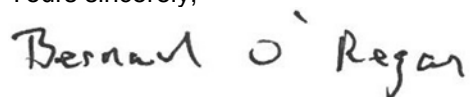
In the past month since the stepping down of the Industrial Action relevant to CDNT services, the HSE has set up its Service Improvement Programme Board and 4 of its 5 Working Groups (WG) including

- o WG 1: Integrated Childrens Services
- o WG 2: Service Access and Improvement, including AON
- o WG 3: Workforce (focused on Retention and Recruitment)
- o WG 4: Communication and Engagement

The remaining WG: Integration between Education and Health, and supports for special schools will be set shortly pending response from NCSE and NEPS.

The WGs will report to the SIP Board which in turn will report to the Minister of State for Disabilities led National Oversight Group.

Yours sincerely,



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

