



Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,
Foireann 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 Assistant National Director,
National Disability Team,
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park,
Castletroy,
Limerick.

12th July 2024

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: fergus.odowd@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

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: 29370/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth his position regarding requests by an organisation (details supplied) to provide sustainable funding for national physiotherapy services for people with multiple sclerosis, and other neurological conditions, totalling €880,000 per annum across all 9 CHOs and an increase of €627,000 in annual investment in the national MS respite centre to build on the €250,000 delivered in 2024.

Details supplied: MS Ireland

HSE Response

HSE Disability Services is allocated funding on an annual basis to provide a range of services throughout the country. Funding is spent in line with nationally agreed policy for disability services, whilst at the same time endeavouring to maximise value. Services include Residential and Respite Services, Day Services, PA and Home Support Services, and Therapeutic Supports.

Disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the person's individual requirements and care needs.

The role of the HSE is to provide a multi-disciplinary team approach which includes the provision of health and personal supports required by people with multiple sclerosis and incorporates hospital, primary care and community services.

The range of community services and supports provided to people with a disability including multiple sclerosis include for example assisted living services (PA and Home Support), Therapy Services, Aids and appliances and Respite Services.



The HSE works in partnership with organisations including Section 38, Section 39, Out of State and For Profit organisations to ensure the best level of service possible is provided to people with a disability, and their families, within the available resources. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.

The HSE acknowledges the role and contribution of non-statutory agencies in the development and provision of health and personal social services and is committed to the development of effective working relationships as enacted by the Health Act 2004.

The HSE has over 1,045 Service Arrangements or Grant Aid Agreements with approximately 419 organisations providing a wide variety of disability services on behalf of the HSE. These Service Arrangements and Grant Aid Agreements are covered by a Governance Framework.

There is continuous engagement between the HSE, the Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) and these agencies to ensure resources are prioritised on the basis of meeting the needs of people with a disability and those caring for them within the allocated resources.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland (MS Ireland)

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland (MS Ireland) MS Ireland provides a range of services and resources to the whole MS Community; those with MS, family members, employers and Health professionals.

Through its Regional Community Workers, MS Ireland organises a range of Living with MS programmes, workshops and activities throughout the country that are targeted at various groups such as those newly diagnosed, carers, children of parents with MS and health professionals. Programmes include physical therapies, symptom management and information/ education seminars.

MS Ireland provides services at a local and national level. Locally their team of regional workers provide one-to-one and group support and their 39 voluntary branches provide opportunities to socialise, share experiences and avail of services.

MS Ireland also operates a confidential helpline that provides immediate information and support to those affected by MS. MS Ireland receives funding from the HSE under section 39 of the Health Act 2004. This funding is governed by a number of Service Arrangements in 7 of the 9 CHO Areas, which identify service delivery provided by the agency in return for the money being provided to them. The Service Arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis.

MS Ireland has received the following funding through HSE Disability Services:

2020: € 2,583,051
2021: € 2,631,822
2022: € 2,680,823
2023: € 2,761,038
2024: € 2,867,082

(Please note:-The funding Information contained is from the SPG system is as at the date indicated, and represents the funding arrangement allocations entered by the operational system. SPG is not a finance or payment system and figures will fluctuate on a continuum as updates on governance arrangement are uploaded.

In addition, information pertaining to 2024 may not be fully uploaded on the SPG system as yet)

Community Healthcare Area 7 (CHO 7) contributes the largest amount of funding at over 69% of the total funding allocated to MS Ireland.

MS Ireland have submitted a Physiotherapy Business case and a Respite Business Case to CHO 7.

The Physiotherapy Business plan proposal is for a Programme to directly employ a senior Physiotherapist in each CHO to deliver group and individual therapy to people with MS.

Their proposal will cost €880,000 per annum to run nationally. The cost includes €94,000 for a Senior Physiotherapist in each CHO.



In CHO 7, MS Ireland have requested recurring funding of €94k for Physiotherapy and €627k additional funding for Respite.

The breakdown of the funding that CHO 7 is currently providing to MS Ireland in 2024 is as follows:

Description	Area	Amount €
Respite Services	DSC	€914,755.00
Grant for Services Provision	DSC	€739,908.00
Pay Restoration	DSC	€320,891.40
		€1,975,554.40

The majority of CHO7 funding to MS Ireland is allocated to Overnight Respite. MS Ireland have 8 respite beds in their facility in Bushy Park which gives annual capacity of 2,800 bed nights and the average cost per bed night is €326.

MS Ireland capacity is currently running at approximately 80% as the service closes every second weekend and bank holidays and the organisation has requested additional funding to address this.

Estimates Process

Each year the HSE participates in the Estimates Process with the Department of Health and makes a submission for additional monies to meet the health and social care needs of the population it services.

The Disability Service makes submissions for additional funding for Day, Residential, Respite, Home Support/PA hours, Multi Disciplinary Posts and Neuro Rehab monies as a key element of its submission. Any new funding secured is allocated to the CHOs to provide services to those with the greatest need (priority basis).

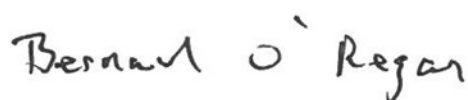
The HSE makes every effort to secure multi-annual investment for services via the Estimates process and is very conscious of the need to deliver disability policy on a more sustainable footing given the significant levels of need for increased and more effective services and supports to enable people with a disability to live independent lives in their own community.

The HSE recognises the value of MS Ireland and the MS Care Centre's support and services to people with Multiple Sclerosis. While the HSE has made submissions for increased funding as part of the current budgetary process, any further increases in funding can only be considered within the parameters and scope of funding made available to the HSE.

The HSE will allocate an additional €250,000 to CHO 7 in 2024 to provide to MS Ireland to commence the delivery of the respite service outlined in the business case they submitted to the HSE.

The HSE will include this service in the forthcoming Estimates process to seek funding for further investment in 2025.

Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

