



**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.

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

Deputy Pauline Tully,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie](mailto:pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Tully,

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

**PQ: 30234/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth further to Parliamentary Question No. 475 of 26 September 2023, if he will detail the information that is taken into consideration when categorising people into priority 1 to priority 4 for referral to assistive technology and specialised seating.*

**PQ: 30235/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth further to Parliamentary Question No. 475 of 26 September 2023, if a disabled person can get assistive technology devices that are not on the HSE national list of community funded aids and appliances and proscribing criteria if they have a clinical requirement for the device to support them in their daily living; and if so, the procedure by which a person can apply for an assistive technology device that is not on the list.*

**PQ: 30238/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth further to Parliamentary Question No. 475 of 26 September 2023, if the central remedial clinic makes the decision to approve or not approve applications for assistive technology and specialised seating directly or if this decision is taken by the resource allocation group in the HSE.*

**HSE Response**

Assistive Technology & Specialised Seating (ATSS) is provided to people with a primary complex physical disability, or dual diagnosis (physical and intellectual disability), or a complex neurological and/or neuromuscular disorder. Providers of ATSS include the HSE, the Central Remedial Clinic (CRC) and Enable Ireland.



The budget and management of aids and appliances via Community Funded Schemes is devolved to the local Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs). There are a variety of aids and appliances provided through community funded schemes and these products play a key role in assisting and supporting service users to maintain every day functioning. Supply of aids and appliances usually involves a qualified health care professional assessing an individual's needs and making a clinical recommendation on the supports required to enhance their daily living.

The Aids and Appliances Service Improvement Group have published a national list of aids and appliances and prescribing criteria on the HSE website. This sets out clear prescribing criteria to assist prescribers in evidence based decision making. This is available from the following webpage:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/community-funded-schemes/aids-and-appliances/>

With regard to the question concerning assistive technology devices that are not on the HSE national list, If a clinician/ recognised prescriber recommends a specific piece of equipment that is not on the current list of approved items or an item that is not available from within the approved list of providers, they can make an application to the local CHO Resource Allocation Group (RAG) outlining why items on the approved list are not clinically supported. This will then be assessed by the RAG and progressed if appropriate.

With regard to the question concerning the information that is taken into consideration when categorising people into priority 1 to priority 4 for referral to assistive technology and specialised seating, each local CHO area will have its own guidelines for this process. A prioritisation tool is completed by the clinician who is working / familiar with the person's needs.

This rating is submitted with the equipment request to the Resource Allocation Group (RAG). The RAG does not change the rating but may revert to the referrer if they have queries.

The Central Remedial Clinic's Assistive Technology Support Services (ATSS) Department, specifically focusing on Assistive Technology Specialised Seating, operates under a strict priority system to ensure that clients receive timely and appropriate assessments and equipment. CRC priority system is comprehensive, beginning at the initial referral and continuing through to the supply of equipment. It is designed to address the most urgent needs first, based on its prioritisation criteria as follows:

#### **Health and Safety Risks**

- Immediate risk of harm or significant deterioration in health.
- Urgent need for equipment to prevent hospitalisation or serious health complications.

#### **Independence**

- Severe compromise in the ability to perform essential daily activities (e.g., pain, pressure, quality of life).
- Significant limitation in independence affecting quality of life.

#### **Communication**

- Urgent need for voice banking assistive technology for clients at risk of losing their ability to speak.
- Immediate requirement for alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) devices to ensure effective communication and safety.

#### **Mobility and Accessibility**

- Critical assessments for alternative access for mobility, such as powered wheelchairs or specialized mobility aids.
- Urgent need for home environment modifications to ensure safety and accessibility (e.g., ramps, bathroom modifications)

#### **Education**

- Immediate need for assistive technology to access school or university, ensuring clients can continue their education without interruption.
- Significant support required to enhance educational activities, though not immediately critical.

#### **Work Environment**

- Urgent need for assistive technology to facilitate the client's ability to work, preventing job loss or significant disruption in their employment.
- Important support needed to enhance work environment, though not immediately critical.



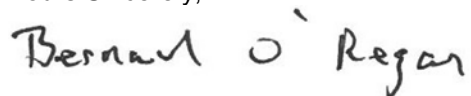
**Mental Health**

- High risk of severe mental health decline due to lack of assistive technology.
- Moderate to low risk of mental health issues that may arise from delays in receiving necessary equipment.

With regard to the question concerning the CRC making a decision to approve or not approve applications for assistive technology and specialised seating, the Central Remedial Clinic (CRC) does not make the decision to approve or disapprove applications for assistive technology and specialized seating directly. This decision is taken by the Resource Allocation Group within the Health Service Executive (HSE).

While the CRC assesses and recommends the need for equipment, the approval and funding decision rests with the HSE's Resource Allocation Group

Yours Sincerely,



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

