



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.

11th March 2024

Deputy Ged Nash,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: ged.nash@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Nash,

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 10100/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if he is aware that there are no specific individualised transport budgets for individuals with additional needs to transport them to respite services; if he plans to address this issue to allow all of those who are provided with a respite service to attend that service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The provision of transport services is not part of core services within disability services. As a general rule public transport should be used in all circumstances where it is an option. This is in keeping with the principle of mainstreaming with a clear focus on ensuring persons with a disability have access to the normal range of services and participate in community life as far as possible. It must be noted that in general, many service users are in receipt of disability allowance and are automatically entitled to the Free Travel Pass.

Unfortunately, public transport options are not available to the majority of service users throughout the country and transport is not included in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth funding for adult disability services. The HSE, service providers and service users' families work together to find viable transport solutions. Many families transport their family member to and from disability services each day. Some service providers have built up their own transport fleet that provides the necessary transport to their service users. Third party contracted transport which may require a contribution from the service users has been negotiated in many areas.



Mobility Allowance and Motorised Transport Grant

The Government decided that new statutory provisions should be established to provide individual payments to people with severe disabilities who require additional income to address the costs of their mobility needs.

In this context, on 26th February 2013, it was decided to close the Mobility Allowance and the Motorised Transport Grant and to seek a solution or solutions to address those with priority needs in a manner compatible with the law and within available financial resources.

The effect of the Government's decision was that both schemes were closed to new entrants with immediate effect. Those whose applications had already been received for either scheme would be assessed and, if found to be qualified, would be paid.

In November 2013, the Government decided that the detailed preparatory work required for a new travel subsidy scheme and associated statutory provisions should be progressed by the Minister for Health, in consultation with other relevant Ministers. The HSE understands that the Department is working to progress the matter in line with the Government's decision.

Primary Medical Certificate

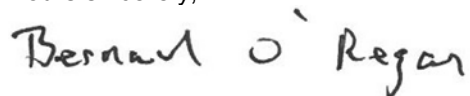
The Drivers and Passengers with Disabilities Tax Relief Scheme provides repayment or remission of VAT and Vehicle Registration Tax (up to a certain limit) on the purchase of an adapted vehicle for the transport of a person with specific severe and permanent physical disabilities. This scheme is run by the Revenue Commissioners.

The medical criteria for entry to the scheme are that the person must be severely and permanently disabled and come within at least one of the following categories:

1. Be wholly or almost wholly without the use of both legs.
2. Be wholly without the use of one of their legs and almost wholly without the use of the other leg such that they are severely restricted as to movement of their lower limbs.
3. Be without both hands or without both arms.
4. Be without one or both legs.
5. Be wholly or almost wholly without the use of both hands or arms and wholly or almost wholly without the use of one leg.
6. Have the medical condition of dwarfism and have serious difficulties of movement of the lower limbs.

To access the scheme, the person with the disability must be in possession of a **Primary Medical Certificate**. Medical assessment and issue of the required certificate is carried out by the Senior Area Medical Officers in the HSE, who report through Primary Care.

Yours sincerely,



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