



Oifig an Stiúirthóir 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.

10th May 2024

Deputy Paul Murphy,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: paul.murphy@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Paul Murphy,

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: 12498/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the reason the CDNT staff allocations are based on 2016 figures

PQ: 12504/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the views of the HSE on how the numbers it allocates for staffing are sufficient to efficiently decrease the waitlist numbers and provide suitable and effective therapies in each CDNT; and if the HSE admits its potential role in understaffing and overworking current employees as a contributing factor for the crisis in finding and retaining therapeutic workers (details supplied)

Details supplied: Take a comparison of CHO 4 and 6. CHO 4 has 14 CDNTs and CHO 6 has 7 CDNTs. CHO 4 covers the areas of Kerry, North Cork, North Lee, South Lee, and West Cork. CHO 6 covers the area of Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East. But if you look at their metrics, you can see that CHO 6 is proportionately staffed, as evidenced by their ability to keep their numbers low, however CHO 4 is understaffed as evidenced by their elevated caseload and waitlist numbers.

HSE Response

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.

Children's Disability Network Teams were established based on a reconfiguration of the existing resources that were available in each area. Allocation of staff to each team was based on a number of factors including child population to staff ratio, skill mix and the latest Census figures which was the 2016 Census.



When development posts are assigned to children's disability services they are allocated to each Community Healthcare Organisation based on the population of children in each area and the approved staffing levels for CDNTs in the area.

Each CHO Governance Group agree how the posts should be assigned to teams as well as the grades and disciplines of staff to be recruited.

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. Teams reconfigured a number of years are reporting an annual increase in the number of new children received, for example, the Midwest has a 21% total increase over the past 3 years.

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.

Based on the CDNT Staffing Census (Oct 2022), there are over 700 vacant whole time equivalent posts in CDNTs. The HSE continues to explore a range of options to enhance the retention and recruitment of essential staff across all aspects of the health services. The HSE is operating in a very competitive global market for healthcare talent as there are significant shortages of qualified healthcare professionals across the globe. The HSE Community Operations Disability Services is working collaboratively with the CDNT lead agencies at CHO level to promote CDNTs as a workplace of choice in a competitive employment market.

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

Due to the recent Forsa Industrial Action, work on the CDNT Staffing Census 2023 was delayed. This will be available in due course.

An Independent Review of the CDNT Service Model by the NDA will include a review of competencies and skill mix required and staffing to child population ratios across teams, to optimally support children and families. It will evaluate the experience of children and families in CDNT services, service providers and staff providing children's disability services including CDNTs, Primary Care, CAMHS and Disability Act Office.

National Information Management System for the CDNTs (CDNTIMS)

Historically the number of children waitlisted for children's disability services provided by section 38 and section 39 providers has not been available nationally. The establishment of CDNTs in 2021 has facilitated the collection of this data. A National Management Information System for all 91 CDNTs is being rolled out and when implemented, will provide current data on waiting lists and other details for all CDNTs. 34 CDNTs are live at this time.

Pending full roll-out, manual data collection is on-going. Information is collated nationally per CHO.

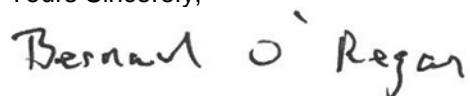


The table below is the most recent data reported to the Business Information Unit (BIU) -end of March 2024. This shows the number of children that are waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT in the 9 CHO Areas including CHO 4 and CHO 6.

End of March 2024 CDNT Metrics BIU statistics	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8*	CHO 9
No. of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	357	149	257	150	87	34	149	361	75
No. of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	257	213	217	147	112	85	114	498	82
No. of children waiting 7-12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	327	260	340	176	209	231	341	367	191
No. of children waiting over 12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	374	378	592	467	1217	1049	2029	1903	2484

Please note that CHO 8 stats are for the end of December 2023.

Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

