



Cnoc Na Rí  
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15<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Mrs. Mary Butler TD  
Minister of State for Mental Health & Older People  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**PQ 44436/24**

**To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to outline the efforts made to provide additional services for children with ADHD and ASD, and their parents, in Waterford; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Minister Butler,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

*I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.*

Services for children with ADHD and ASD and their parents receive health and social care services across care groups in disability, primary care and mental health, and as such is not exclusive to disability services. In relation to disability services, there are three Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) in Waterford – Waterford North, Waterford South and Dungarvan. CDNTs provide services to children with a complex disability which can include children with Co-Morbidity ADHD and ASD.

CDNTs offer a wide variety of training programmes such as Early Bird and Cygnet to parents and guardians of children with autism. These training programmes aim to empower parents in the areas of understanding autism, communication, sensory processing, and social skills and are delivered through a combination of group attendances and individual home visits.

Under Progressing Disability Services (PDS) significant funding was allocated to all CDNTs to provide this ongoing training. Training planned to date for 2024-2025 is being organised around the following themes and topics

- Autism Supports – to ensure a high level of assessment and post diagnostic intervention is offered to families
- Intellectual Disability

- Parent supports- helping support parents on their journey of understanding their child's disability
- Challenging Behaviours - offer a prophylactic approach to managing specific behaviours to help reduce need for future, more intensive, inputs.
- Sensory & Communication - to help develop sensory & communication targeted strategies in line with evidenced based practice.

Neurodiversity refers to the diversity of all people, but it is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities. Neurodiversity affirming Practice training has been held in 2024. Autism Level Up training took place in November 2024. Other training planned to take place in 2025 include DIR Floortime, SOS ( Sequential- Oral-Sensory), Approach to Feeding, Down Syndrome Education, Seat tech ( level 1 and 2) and Gestalt Language Processing.

Along with CDNTs identifying training needs, it is important in the co-design of services to consult with and involve parents / families/ young people living with neurodiversity in this process - to hear their views, specific needs and suggestions for areas of improvement. All CDNTs hold family forums. All parents are invited to attend and this is where their voices are heard in terms of service planning. There are two regional family representatives elected by the parents from the region who sit on the South East Governance group. This is a strategy group to co design services with HSE, Families of children accepted to services and voluntary service providers.

Mental Health Services have advised that there is an ADHD Clinic within the CAMHS teams located at Ferrybank Primary Care Centre in Waterford with two CAMHS Consultant Clinical Leads.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



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**Ms. Paula Dwan**  
**General Manager for Children's Disability Services,**  
**South East Community Healthcare**