



**Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,**  
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,  
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,  
Àras 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.

13<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Deputy Charles Flanagan,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [charles.flanagan@oireachtas.ie](mailto:charles.flanagan@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Flanagan,

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: 39885/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth in relation to a recent proposal implemented in a special school in County Wexford and known as the Wexford model, whereby additional therapy supports were directly commissioned by the HSE and under the governance of the local CDNT manager, if such a model is applicable to other special schools across the State; and if so, if how such proposals may become operational.*

**HSE Response**

The Health Services Executive, and the Lead Agencies it funds, have been working continuously to develop supports for children with Disabilities.

In line with Government policy, the HSE has recruited approximately 80 of the 136 additional posts provided for by Government to restore supports to special schools to pre-reconfiguration levels.

The HSE and funded agencies continue to prioritise retention and recruitment for children's services, including these posts. The range of measures have included:

- Dedicated and rolling recruitment campaigns
- The use of agency staffing where available
- Dedicated webinars with new graduates to attract them to work in CDNTs
- Engagement with Government to expand the number of HSCP training places
- Development of measures to enhance clinical placements in disability services
- Development of a 3 year student sponsorship programme



The HSE and all Lead Agencies continue to use every effort possible to source additional private service provision, and where in most cases, the clinical governance element remains with the service provider as is normal practice.

In addition, any additional therapy capacity available from other organisations in their respective areas can be commissioned to provide supports to children and families under the governance of the CDNT, including provision to children in special schools.

### **Pilot in Special Schools**

In August 2024, Government asked the HSE to initiate a pilot of dedicated supports, under the governance of the CDNTs, to six special schools initially, two in Dublin and four in Cork.

The HSE continues work with Lead Agencies to recruit staff for provision of on-site therapy supports in the six schools and meanwhile, progressing interim measures including redeployment of existing staff from CDNTs, private service providers, and engaging recently retired therapists.

The HSE is working with representatives from DCEDIY, Dept. of Education and the NCSE at the National Oversight Group to lead the overall Pilot. In addition, local working groups have been established and are currently developing a joint working model of service.

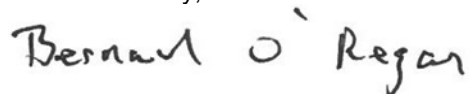
A further ten schools are to be included in the Pilot and the National Oversight Group has commenced consideration of which schools are to be included. It is expected that this will be concluded and the schools announced in due course.

With regard to the question concerning the “Wexford Model,” this is where the HSE commissions additional supports from a S39 service provider, the supports are under the governance of the Clinical Disability Network Team Manager and are assigned to the special school.

In the special schools pilot described above, the HSE or other Lead Agency is recruiting the additional SLT and OT, pro rata of 1 WTE of each discipline to 100 children.

In the interim, the Lead Agencies are doing as much as possible to provide as many onsite hours in the pilot special schools out of the total hours provided for those children attending those special schools. This is currently the case in relation to services provided across a range of settings (not just in the Special Schools setting).

Yours Sincerely,



**Bernard O'Regan**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**National Disability Team**

