

4<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

Mr. Aindrias Moynihan, T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ ref 43589/24:**

**“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the measures being taken to ensure capacity in respite care in County Cork for children with disabilities can meet demand on this service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to respond to your parliamentary question submitted to the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth for response.

The Regional Children’s Respite Forum, established in 2022, manages referrals and the allocation of respite and/or home supports for children with complex disabilities, up to the age of 18 years and who are in receipt of services from a Children’s Disability Network Team. Children’s Disability Services are acutely aware of the demand for respite services and has significantly invested in respite services in recent years.

In Cork, overnight respite services for children under 18 years of age with an intellectual disability, physical disability or autism are delivered by COPE Foundation, Enable Ireland, St. Joseph’s Foundation, CoAction West Cork and the Brothers of Charity Southern Services. There are a total of 29 children’s respite beds.

There are also a number of day respite sessions provided to children which comprises *centre based* and *outreach* services for children. Day respite is provided in a variety of ways and settings such as in the home, in the community, during holiday time, as well as home share with host families and through after-school services.

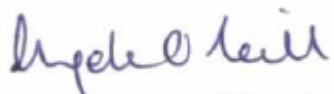
Cork Kerry Disability Services has commissioned respite from the Rainbow Club who are currently providing 6 week blocks of respite services in the Cork area. The Rainbow Club provides for after-school supports, social groups, teen supports, adapted sports and additional activities on Saturdays. It is estimated that approximately 4,000 hours will be delivered in 2024.

Respite is allocated to children based on their individual needs, their compatibility with other service users and the knowledge/ skill set required by staff to support those needs within available resources.

We are continuing to engage with service providers in the area to progress plans for additional, much needed respite supports for children and young people with complex disability needs.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely,



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Ms. Angela O'Neill,  
Head of Disability Services,  
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare.

