

25th September, 2024

Ms. Holly Cairns, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 36079/24

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of staff available for respite cover at weekends for children with disabilities at a location (details supplied); and the number of children receiving such care, from 2019 to date, in tabular form.”

Details Supplied: CoAction, Dunmanway, Cork.

Dear Deputy Cairns,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth for response.

The Cork Kerry Regional Children’s Respite Forum 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 CDNT. Children’s Disability Services are acutely aware of the demand for respite services and has secured additional investment in respite services in recent years.

Dunmanway Children’s Respite Services is a designated centre under the Health Act, 2007. The service currently provides respite breaks midweek for 50 weeks of the year and weekend respite for 44 weeks of the year.

Table 1 indicates the number of staff available to provide this service from 2019 to date:

Year	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual YTD (to 1st Sept)
SW	1.73	1.64	1.82	1.81	2.82	1.80
SCW	0.54	0.54	0.86	0.86	1.38	1.38
Nursing	0.29	0.09	0.00	0.16	0.48	0.48
Person in Charge	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Total	3.56	3.27	3.68	3.83	5.68	4.66

Table 1

Table 2 indicates the number of children who have been supported since 2019:

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD (to 1st Sept)
Children per Year	21	20	18	18	16	16
Sleep Over Nights per Year	292	108	85	178	280	228
Day Session Per Year	147	101	80	86	83	126

Table 2

Based on current staffing, the service can support a maximum of four children per night. The overnight capacity of the service may be reduced depending on the assessed need of individual children and the supports required to ensure a safe and effective service is provided.

CoAction acknowledges that the resources available to provide respite is less than that required to meet the need in the area. Co Action allocate respite provision based on a risk-based needs assessment to ensure the service is safe and responsive.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Yours sincerely,



Patricia O'Neill
A/ Head of Disability Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare

