



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.

2nd October 2024

Deputy Alan Kelly
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: alan.kelly@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Kelly,

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: 36800/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the additional funding that was provided in 2024 for additional development measures for childrens' services; and the way this funding was spent this year.

HSE Response

93 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.

The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for over 46,000 children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow. However, 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

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People 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.

The Roadmap, now in its implementation phase, has established four Working Groups which report into a Service Improvement Programme Board every month which in turn reports to the Roadmap Oversight Group chaired by the Minister of State, Ann Rabbitte.



With regard to new measures for Disability Services, please see the Table below which provides a breakdown of New Service developments Pay and Non Pay 2024.

HSE New Service Developments Allocation	WTEs	Pay €m	NonPay	
			€m	Total €m
Residential Placements	246	10.075	5.425	15.500
Tusla placements	0	0.000	5.000	5.000
Respite	122	6.000	9.000	15.000
School Leavers - new intake	231	6.370	11.830	18.200
Educational Programmes	0	0.000	2.000	2.000
Therapy Assistant Positions	88	2.450	1.050	3.500
Children's Targeted Services	0	0.000	3.000	3.000
Home Support Rate Equalisation	0	0.000	3.500	3.500
Neuro Community	21	1.120	0.280	1.400
PA Hours	0	0.000	2.000	2.000
Mobility and transport schemes	0	0.000	5.000	5.000
HSE New Service Developments Allocation 2024	707	26.015	48.085	74.100
<i>Note: Only funding provided to statutory and S38 organisations has a WTE impact. Therefore the above WTE, Pay, NonPay allocation is an estimate and subject to change pending the confirmation of funding to all HSE funded organisations .</i>				

Specifically, with regard to new Service Developments for Childrens' Disability Services, the above table provides information on the following: Childrens' Targeted services, Therapy Assistant Positions, Educational programmes, and School Leavers, however services for children would also be included in other areas for example, Tusla placements, Residential Placements and Respite Services.

Additional funding

In addition, approximately €10.5m was spent in 2023 to address waiting lists for clinical assessments identified through the Assessment of Need process and in 2024, an additional €5m in one off funding was allocated. This funding was utilised to procure diagnostic ASD assessments from the private sector. The HSE at local level also using time related savings to source AON assessments privately for children in the order as registered on the AOS (AON information management system) in line with the date of receipt of a completed AON application.

Targeted Initiative focussed on long waiting families

A new targeted waiting list initiative is in place and the Government has allocated funding of €6.89 million to facilitate the HSE to procure up to 2,500 additional AONs, with delivery targeted over the next 6 months. This funding is in addition to existing funding of the €5m mentioned above, allocated for procurement of private assessments.

This waiting list initiative will target those families waiting longest for AONs, with the HSE reimbursing clinicians directly through the procurement of capacity from approved private providers. This provides a more equitable and fair approach rather than reimbursement of parents directly.

Funding has been allocated to each CHO area for the provision of Assessment of Need.

It is envisaged that this initiative will be progressed through the existing framework of providers procured by each CHO Area, while also seeking to expand the list with any new private provision.

In the first half of 2024, 1,841 AONs have been completed, which is a 28% increase on the same period last year. This increase is due in part to this new targeted waiting list initiative that commenced end of May 2024.

Information received from the CHO Areas indicates that under this targeted initiative, 1,092 AONs have been commissioned from private providers/assessors during June, July and August at a cost of €3,574,189. This suggests that the average cost per AON is roughly €3,300.



	Number of AONs	Cost	Average Cost per AON
June	379	€1,245,455	€3,300
July	342	€1,155,703	€3,379
August	371	€1,173,031	€3,162
Total to date	1,092	€3,574,189	€3,273

Yours Sincerely,

Bernard O'Regan

Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

