



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.

17th October 2024

Deputy Sean Sherlock,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sean.sherlock@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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: 37316/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of on-site school therapists operating in each special school, by county; and their grade and level, in tabular form.

PQ: 37319/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the budget line for school therapy places available; and the amount spent in 2023 and to date in 2024.

HSE Response

Ongoing recruitment of an additional 135 senior posts remains a priority to restore health and social care supports historically provided in special schools as directed by the Government.

HSE National Disabilities continue to engage with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Education in the context of ongoing discussions to explore further initiatives to progress the return of therapists to Special Schools.

In line with Government policy, the HSE has recruited approximately 80 of the 135 additional posts provided for by Government to restore supports to special schools to pre-reconfiguration levels.

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 later in October 2024.

Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People

In 2023, €11.5m was allocated for 135 posts to restore pre-existing services in 104 special schools.


The Roadmap actions will optimise the use of existing budgets including time-related savings whilst additional funding requirements outlined below will be progressed through the Estimates and budgetary processes. Additional capital and infrastructural requirements will be informed by development of the CDNTs National Capital Plan by Q1 2024 (Action 2.17).

The Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People actions optimises the use of existing budgets including time-related savings whilst additional funding requirements outlined below is progressed through the Estimates and budgetary processes.

<p>2023 Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €11m (Budget 2023) to implement the Special Schools initiative• Additional €11.5m to implement the Waiting List Initiative to provide diagnostic assessments for those children on waiting lists	<p>2024 Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €6.0m for additional 78 WTE paediatric posts to Primary Care CHNs to build service capacity to meet the needs of children with disabilities with non-complex need)• Funding to drive the Roadmap Service Improvement Programme<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Service Improvement Lead• 9 CHO Service Improvement Leads
<p>2025 Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2025), half year costs*• €12.5m for 300 Therapy Assistant posts*	<p>2026 Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2025), full year costs*• €12.55m for additional 180 CDNT posts (2026) half year costs* (FYC requires additional 12.55m in 2027)

* This is a critical part of a two and half year commitment over 2023 – 2026 to enhancing the staffing levels on CDNTs to meet the needs of children and families.

Yours sincerely,



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

