



Oifig an Stiúrthóir 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,

22nd January 2025

Deputy Mark Ward,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: mark.ward@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Ward,

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: 46320/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the amount of Government funding received by an organisation (details supplied) in 2024; the remit of the organisation; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: Vision Ireland

HSE Response

Vision Ireland (previously known as the National Council for the Blind of Ireland NCBI) is a not for profit charitable organisation which provides support and services nationwide to people experiencing sight loss. Vision Ireland's mission is to enable people who are blind and vision impaired to overcome the barriers that impede their independence and participation in society.

It is estimated that there are approximately 55,000 people living with severe visual impairment and blindness across Ireland. Almost 95% of these people have some degree of useful vision while 5% or approximately 2,750 of those are blind.

The organisation offers community based services to help people to adapt to sight loss and maintain their independence. These services include emotional support to the individual experiencing loss of vision and to their families, advice and information on all aspects of vision loss as well as practical support and solutions to the challenges encountered by people with vision loss. Services are offered to people of all ages, from birth through to older age.

Vision Ireland operates a Library and Media Centre that provides Braille production of books for visually impaired service users. Talking books and newspapers are also distributed to the national service users' base and the library currently comprises 16,000 titles in a number of different formats.



Vision Ireland also provide a range of services to public and private organisations to make sure that their services are accessible to people who are blind and vision impaired.

In addition, Vision Ireland advises government departments, companies and individuals on how to make the built environment and services accessible to people with sight loss.

Day Services

Vision Ireland has two Resource Centres that provide day opportunities to support people with sight loss. The Iona Resource Centre is located in Drumcondra, Dublin and the Lochrann Resource Centre is in the centre of Wexford Town. Both Centres deliver a specialised service for people with a visual impairment, providing each service user with a personalised individual plan that is tailored to meet their specific needs.

Day services in both Centres are fully compliant with HSE New Directions and the services provided aim to enable service users to play a fulfilling and engaging role within their local community; whether that be for employment, work experience or recreational and social activities.

The Resource Centres run skills programmes and offer a range of activities including sessions on; technology, health & wellbeing, social discourse, community integration and many more sessions according to the needs and goals of individual service users.

Programmes offered at the Resource centres include:

- **Skills for Stability:** Programme designed to provide social and communication skills stimulation whilst providing engaging personalised programme and an opportunity to maintain and learn new skills.
- **Skills for life:** Programme designed for learning new skills. Specialised sessions Design your own bespoke programme Enabling skills development and progression towards your own individual goal.
- **Skills for Me:** Flexible, personalised programme that fits around your needs – work, education or a hectic lifestyle. Select sessions that suit and enable you to upskill, and receive specialised support.

In addition, Vision Ireland's Digital and Assistive Technology Project offers the following core technology services:

- **Technology Training:** On average over 400 Service Users per month avail of training specific to technology.
- **Technology Support:** To Over 3,000 instances of technology support, via phone, email and one to one.
- **Virtual Technology Clubs:** Nationwide weekly connecting with over 200 Service Users monthly to discuss Technology.
- **Technology Live Events:** Biweekly where Vision Ireland reach over 400 people for each show -to discuss all things technology and advise on the latest technology that have been able to trial.

Eye Clinic Liaison Officer Service

Vision Ireland provide an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer Service (ECLO) Service which will be available across six of Ireland's largest acute eye clinic – Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Royal Victoria Eye and Ear, CHI at Temple Street, CHI at Crumlin, Cork University Hospital, and University Hospital Waterford.

In due course, the ECLO service will also transfer to the new Childrens Hospital.

Funding

HSE Disability Services fund Vision Ireland, under Section 39 of the Health Act to provide a range of centre, domiciliary and community based services to people who are blind or vision impaired. This funding is governed by a number of Service Arrangements in all 9 CHO Areas, which identify service delivery provided by the agency in return for the money being provided to them. The Service Arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis.



Vision Ireland received funding of €8,260,342* in 2024 from the HSE.

*Please note:-The funding Information contained is from the SPG system is as at the date indicated, and represents the funding arrangement allocations entered by the operational system. SPG is not a finance or payment system and figures will fluctuate on a continuum as updates on governance arrangement are uploaded.

Yours Sincerely,

Bernard O'Regan

Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

