

**Secondment Opportunity: Clinical Specialist / Therapy Advisor**

**Disability Division**

**Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth**

**Disability Division of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)**

The Disability Division of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth’s Disability Division has responsibility for policy, legislation, investment and oversight of specialist community-based disability services, and for co-ordination of policy and strategy across Government on social inclusion and advancing human rights of people with disabilities. The Department is the Government’s Focal Point for implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Specialist disability services are provided to over 80,000 people with intellectual, physical or sensory disabilities, or autism, who have more complex support needs. For adults, the primary condition of the majority of service users (60%) is an intellectual disability, followed by a neurological condition (17%), physical disability (7%), autism (7%), and either a visual, hearing or speech and language impairment (total 8%). The pattern for children is quite different, with the largest number (where a condition is known) with a primary condition of autism (39%) followed by intellectual disability (24%), physical disability (6%), and speech/language, hearing or visual impairment (4%).

Specialist disability services include multidisciplinary services for children and adults; day services; personal assistance; home support; respite; and residential care. The HSE is responsible for operational matters, while the Department’s role is on strategy, policy and oversight rather than day to day delivery. Our Department’s goal is to help expand and transform these specialist disability services, over time, towards more person-centred services that meet people’s individual needs, and in line with the ambition set out in the Disability Services Action Plan 2024-2026, and the Roadmap for Children’s Disability Services.

The Division’s broader cross-government disability steering and coordination remit includes the 22% of the population, around 1.1 million people, who reported in the 2022 Census that they had a disability. Work is well advanced on a new cross-Government National Disability Strategy to advance the delivery in Ireland of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

1. **Location and blended working**

Please note that this post in based in Dublin, with the Division operating a hybrid working model in line with Departmental policies. Notwithstanding the level of attendance expected onsite, there will be a requirement to attend relevant meetings on days other than those agreed.

1. **The Role**

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is seeking applications for the position of Clinical Specialist/Therapy Advisor within the Disability Division. The successful candidate will provide clinical expertise, knowledge of evidence-based practice, and of good practice in service delivery, to inform the development and implementation of policy and of supports, particularly in relation to specialist disability services.

The appointee will work closely with colleagues across the Disability Division and with the HSE, around improvement of delivery of multidisciplinary services to children and adults. The initial focus of the role will primarily be on children’s services. The appointee will also engage collaboratively with other stakeholders, including disability organisations, the Department of Education, the National Council for Special Education, and service providers.

1. **Principal Duties and Responsibilities of the Role**

The successful candidate will:

* Work with senior management across the Disability Division within DCEDIY to help develop policies and strategies, and to contribute to policy implementation and evaluation of outcomes, particularly in relation to specialist disability support services.
* Provide a clinical and practice input to the work of the Division team, informed by successful evidence-based approaches.
* Review relevant international practice and research to inform the development of clinical guidance relating to disability services.
* Provide advice on models of service to address changing needs.
* Contribute to policy development and to policy evaluation.
* Provide a clinical perspective and input to a review of Part 2 of the Disability Act which deals with statutory Assessments of Need, and the Service Statements prepared following such assessments.
* Work collaboratively with, and complement, HSE Clinical Leads on disability services.
* Work collaboratively with relevant policy units in the Department of Health, including but not limited to Primary Care Policy, Mental Health Policy and Acute Hospital Policy, particularly in the context of the Sláintecare vision for integrated health services.
* Represent the Department where required on relevant fora, cross-agency groups and Oireachtas engagement.
* Strong initial focus of the role will be on multi-disciplinary services for children with additional needs, supporting the implementation of the Roadmap for Children’s Disability Services, and working jointly with education colleagues around effective and appropriate models of support for these children.
* Carry out any other duties appropriate to the role that may be assigned by senior leadership within the Department and Division including management of staff/team where required.

1. **Person specification**

This role is suited to a senior clinician who has worked in multidisciplinary teams, can bring a cross-disciplinary lens to the role, and has experience in strategic planning and management of disability services.

1. **Eligibility/Essential Requirements for the Post**

Candidates **must**, on or before the closing date:

* Be already serving in the public service, the HSE, or in a relevant organisation funded under s38 of the Health Act 2004 (for whom secondment arrangements can be made)
* Have satisfactorily completed probation in their current grade;
* Be registered with the relevant registration board at CORÚ or eligible to be registered with the relevant registration board at CORÚ or hold a clinical/ counselling/ educational psychology qualification as per the HSE eligibility criteria.
* Have practiced as a registered Health & Social Care Professional or a clinical/ counselling/ educational Psychologist in a health and social care role.
* Possess the requisite knowledge and ability and ability, including a high standard of suitability, for the proper discharge of the office.
* Have significant managerial and strategic experience relevant to this role which can be demonstrated by the below list:
* Evidence of effective strategic management of therapy services in the health or education sectors
* Evidence of skills and experience in contributing to policy development and analysis.
* Proven experience of service delivery in a relevant setting.
* Experience or delivery of change management or a reform programme.
* Strong strategic thinking capacity with an ability to understand linkages and interconnections, for example between therapy and education policy areas.
* Excellent written communication skills (a sample of written work or a link to published work should be provided with the application)
* Have excellent interpersonal, communication, management, organisational, networking and stakeholder skills and an ability to work with staff in all grades across teams.
* Experience of interaction and collaboration with multiple stakeholders including other state agencies, and representative bodies
* Ability to work effectively across the system and secure buy-in from internal and external stakeholders.

**Desirable**

* Experience of working in disability services or in special education.
* A professional knowledge and understanding of behaviour support.
* A professional knowledge and understanding of autism.

**Health**

A candidate for and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

**Character**

Each candidate for and any person holding the office must be of good character. Applicants should be aware that no panel will be formed from this competition from which any permanent posts will be filled now or in the future.

1. **Application Process**

Applicants should submit a C.V. including a cover letter, highlighting relevant experience and a personal statement setting out their reasons for considering themselves suitable for the role, by email to Niall Bradley in the HR Unit, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth at [recruitment@equality.gov.ie](mailto:recruitment@equality.gov.ie) by close of business on 13th January 2025. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

Optional: Candidates can include links to any published work or submit a piece of written work (no more than 2,000 words) relevant to the role in their personal statement.

Informal Enquires to:

Colm O’Conaill, Assistant Secretary General, Disability Division

Email: [Colm.OConaill@equality.gov.ie](mailto:Colm.OConaill@equality.gov.ie)

1. **Conditions of Assignment**

* On secondment, the successful candidate will retain the terms and conditions of their existing grade. It will be necessary to certify that the candidate has worked well in his or her present post, has been satisfactory in general conduct and in respect of sick leave prior to the candidate being offered a position.
* The role is full-time and will be for a period of 1 year initially, with a possible extension of a further 2 years.
* The secondment arrangement will be reviewed after three months to ensure that it is meeting the expectations of both parties;
* In the event of an officer’s service not being satisfactory the secondment arrangement will cease, and the officer will return to his or her parent organisation;
* While on secondment an officer will continue to have access to promotion opportunities in his/her parent organisation;
* While on secondment an officer will not be eligible to compete in internal promotion competitions which are restricted to staff of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth;
* At the end of the period of secondment, the officer will return to his or her parent organisation or another employer in the Public/Civil Service, in accordance with the redeployment arrangements applying at that time.

1. **Selection Process**

When the closing date has passed, the Department will undertake a selection process. This may include an initial shortlisting of applications to ascertain the applicants who best meet the requirements of the advertised position. Applicant(s) may then be invited to a meeting to discuss and explore their skills and potential to meet the requirements of the advertised position.