



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

New Directions Guidance Document
Defining New Service Locations

February 2016.

New Directions - Defining New Service Locations

1. Context

The purpose of this document is to guide the day service sector in the establishment of new Service Locations that are aligned with the New Directions policy. It also provides guidance to service providers that will be embarking on the reconfiguration of existing Service Locations in line with New Directions.

New Directions states that “Service Locations should be decided with a view to enabling people with disabilities to be an integral part of the community rather than segregated or removed from the community. As far as possible buildings where services are provided should be located in integrated community settings. Any new physical development should take the form of a “hub”¹ from which people with disabilities can be supported to access local services”.

The location from which people receive their supports impacts on such things as:

- Building community opportunities and support so that people can have ordinary lives in ordinary places.
- Maximising opportunities for individuals to avail of community services.
- Facilitating active citizenship is how individuals gain access to opportunities based upon what resources are available in a person’s community.
- Enhancing the potential for building support around people.
- Enabling people to do things that are meaningful for them to do and connecting with local people.

In the above context, it is critical that new Service Locations comply with well defined criteria. New Directions’ core values are - Community Inclusion, Active Citizenship, Quality and Person Centredness and these values are the road map for clarifying the characteristics of a “Service Location” that is in line with New Directions policy.

¹ The word “hub” is used in the New Directions document but there is evidence that this term has been interpreted in so many different ways that we are now using the term “**Service Location**” to provide ongoing clarity.

These are:

Person Centeredness – New Directions Personal Support Services will either be facilitated from a Service Location or from the person’s home in line with their choices, needs and abilities. Where the choice is to access supports from a Service Location – this location should be as close as possible to where the person lives. Service Locations must also take cognisance of specific needs of users and some locations will need to be tailored to meet the needs of specific groups e.g. people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and people with severe/profound/multiple disabilities.

Community Inclusion and Active Citizenship – Service Locations should be located in the heart of the community within a short distance of other community services. Where possible, integrated Service Locations are recommended - this is where a day service provider shares premises with other community services. The Service Location should act as the “*hub*”² or heart of all activities that are central to the 12 supports in New Directions.

Quality – Service Locations should meet the relevant criteria contained in the Interim Standards for New Directions including all relevant planning and safety regulations.

What New Directions advocates in regard to future Service Locations is in line with the “Transforming Lives” principle of de congregation. Service Locations will be developed as smaller units serving the needs of people that live locally.

2. Service Location Criteria

- It is a physical location.
- It is ‘local’ to where the individual with a disability lives.
- It is centrally located within a village or town providing easy access to other community services e.g. transport, shops, leisure facilities etc.
- It serves a local population, rather than serving the needs of a larger geographical area.
- Numbers supported in a Service Location should be significantly less than the traditional centre-based model of day service. There are a number of factors that will determine the number of people that can receive services from a Service Location.

These are as follows:

- The needs of the people that require to be supported by the service.
- The community facilities available for people to access.
- The geographic location of the service.

² The word “hub” is used in the New Directions document but there is evidence that this term has been interpreted in so many different ways that we are now using the term “**Service Location**” to provide ongoing clarity.

In principle there should be no more than 25 people supported from a Service Location at any given time. Depending on the needs of the people that require a service – this number may be reduced but should not be increased. However, the number of 25 in a Service Location at any one time allows for a greater number of people to be supported from a Service Location as the expectation is that people will be away from the location and accessing local community services in line with their person centred plan for part of the week. Therefore, a Service Location may, for example, be supporting 35-40 people but there will be a maximum of 25 at the location at any given time. In this context, cognisance will have to be taken of remote and rural communities where access to other community facilities will be limited.

- Proposals in respect of the development of proposed new Service Locations will need to be approved by the HSE at local CHO level.
- It should be accessible.
- Where possible and appropriate - It could be part of an established community facility e.g. community centre.
- It acts as a focal point to progress the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- It is a resource that provides information and support to people with disabilities.
- In a Service Location – the focus should be on the 12 supports in New Directions. The only programmes provided on a group basis within a Service Location should relate to the programmes and services that are named to deliver each of the 12 supports. For people that require these programmes – they should be time defined and viewed as preparatory foundation programmes that will prepare people to access integrated community services in line with the goals and targets in their person centred plan.
- The New Directions service is managed by a HSE funded service provider.

3. What Current Service Locations do not Comply with the Criteria?

- A campus based location.
- A Service Location based in an industrial estate.
- Any Service Location that is removed from the nucleus of the community.
- A house in a housing estate that is not within short distance of accessing appropriate community services.

4. Reconfiguring Existing Service Locations

Some existing Service Locations will meet the criteria set out above and are therefore a most appropriate Service Location from which adults with disabilities that reside close to those locations are provided with their chosen supports.

Current day services, that are located in segregated disability campus based facilities and those located away from the nucleus of the community, will require a considered Community Inclusion and Active Citizenship Strategy as part of their Implementation Plan for New Directions.

This will be required to address the obstacles to Community Inclusion and Active Citizenship as a consequence of being separate to the nucleus of the community until such time as a more suitable location and the resource required to commission this location are both identified.

Each organisation will have a New Directions Implementation Plan that should also address the gradual relocation of segregated services to integrated Service Location developments. In this regard, where premises are rented/leased – relocation planning should coincide with expiry of lease/rental agreements or shorter term leases should be considered while other more appropriate integrated options are explored.

Where segregated premises are owned by service providers, consideration should be given to reinvesting in an appropriate integrated Service Location development or a number of developments.