



Roadmap for Service Improvement: Disability Services for Children and Young People 2023 - 2026

What is the Roadmap for Service Improvement?

It is a programme that maps out what is needed to make sure that **all** children with disabilities who need the support of an interdisciplinary team have access to one. An interdisciplinary team involves a group of professionals bringing their different skills and experience together to support the child to achieve their goals.

The Roadmap looks at the challenges and strengths of disability services right now and sets goals that will make the system better.

The aim of the HSE and its partner agencies is that every child can have a childhood of inclusive experiences where they can have fun, learn, develop interests and skills, and form positive relationships with others.

Every child and every family has its own set of needs and they need a service that supports them as quickly as possible. They need to be kept informed about what is happening, and have their voices heard and responded to. Services must be provided in a mix of ways that have been shown to work for children and families.



What is a Children's Disability Network Team or CDNT?

A Children's Disability Network Team is a team of health and social care professionals supported by admin staff, who provide supports and services for children with complex needs.

All teams have occupational therapists, psychologists, physiotherapists, social workers, and speech and language therapists. Some teams will also have access to dieticians, family support workers, nurses, behaviour support workers or social care workers. Each team is led by a Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM) on behalf of a lead agency.

A CDNT Service Review will look at what is needed from a team such as the mix of skills and types of services.

CDNT supports and services are based on a model that places great importance on the team and the family working together as partners. The team aims to focus on the child's strengths and set goals with the family which support the child in meaningful ways. This includes all parts of life at home, school and in the community and involves partnering with staff and supporters in these areas.

This family centred process begins with everyone working together to make a plan. This will identify supports that the team will give the child to help them achieve their goals.

Challenges for Children's Disability Network Teams

Waiting Lists and Service Demand

16,522 children are waiting for their first appointment.

45,741 children currently in a CDNT service. 91 teams.

Number of children needing support is growing each year. Midwest increase of 21% over the past 3 years.

Assessment of Need Vs Therapeutic Intervention

Limited staff completing the Assessments of Need in line with the law reduces the time available to provide interventions.

19,042 Assessments of Need target to be delivered.

Staff Numbers

707 vacant positions (34% nationally).

Many of these are in psychology, speech and language, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

Reports of high staff turnover, especially in highly skilled positions.

CDNT Set Up

Some teams are not all working out of the same location yet which is important for providing family centred supports.

Some teams do not have the right spaces and equipment to allow their members to work together and provide children and families the service they need.

The Roadmap: Five Areas of Improvement

The Roadmap includes a list of five clear areas in which 60 actions will be carried out in an acceptable amount of time. These will be monitored and reviewed so we can see if they are working.

- 1** Integrated Services between Disabilities, Primary Care, CAMHS and Tusla. This means all the supports that a child might need from different agencies will work together.
- 2** CDNT Service Access and Improvement including the Assessment of Need
- 3** Workforce/Staffing including filling and keeping staff positions full, supporting staff development.
- 4** Communication and Engagement with Children and Families, and with Staff (this includes Family Forums).
- 5** Engagement with Education making sure health and education work together.

The 60 SMART actions include things like....



WORKING TOGETHER

All service /support providers will work together in a planned and intentional way.



LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS

Each CHO area will make it's own Service Improvement Plan with monthly targets on Assessment of Need and waiting lists.



AIDS AND APPLIANCES

There will be a review of access to Aids and Appliances for children so everyone has good and equal access.



ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND THERAPY SUPPORTS

16,522 children will have had their first support session with their team.

19,042 AONs will be delivered.

STAFFING

460 vacancies to be filled by the end of 2024 and 240 vacancies filled by the end of 2025.

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

The HSE will continue to work with the Department of Education, the NCSE and NEPS to support students in the best way possible.





What is a Family Forum?

Family Forums are a chance for families to have their voices heard and to guide the development of health service supports in their area. It is a chance to discuss all kinds of issues and ideas for improvement of CDNT services.

Two representatives from each Family Forum in the CHO are voted in by its members to share feedback and learning, and to represent families on the Family Representative Group for their area.

There are 9 CHOs or Community Healthcare Organisations across the country that are responsible for the delivery of primary and community based services.

Two members of the Family Representative Group are on the CHO Children's Disability Network Teams Governance Group.

The inclusion of family representatives on CHO Children's Disability Networks Governance Group adds great value by:

- Ensuring there is a focus at all times on the needs of children and their families.
- Bringing the families' views on all issues discussed.
- Bringing a wide range of skills and experience.
- Bringing lived experience and themes brought to light by the Family Forums.



For a map of Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) areas go to:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/healthy-ireland/hospital-groups/cho-area-map-with-hospital-groups1.pdf>



To find your local Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) go to:

<https://www2.hse.ie/services/disability/childrens-services/services/find-a-cdnt/>



For a detailed version of the Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 - Q2, 2026 go to:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/>



This document was produced with support from Inclusion Ireland: The National Association for People with Intellectual Disability

