6th October 2014

Deputy Finian McGrath,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: finian.mcgrath@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy McGrath,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ 33930/14
To ask the Minister for Health if he will support a matter (details supplied); regarding section 2 of the Health Act 2007; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34731/14
To ask the Minister for; Minister for Health if he will support service provision by the National Association of Housing for the Visually Impaired (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 34732/14
To ask the Minister for; Minister for Health if funding will be made available to an organisation (National Association for the Visually Impaired); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Disability services are provided to enable each individual with a disability, to achieve his or her full potential and maximise independence, including living as independently as possible. Services are provided in a variety of community and residential settings in partnership with service users, their families and carers and a range of statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and community groups. Services, in the main, are provided either directly by the HSE or through a range of voluntary service providers. Voluntary agencies provide the majority of services in partnership with and on behalf of the Health Service Executive, including residential services.

Disability Services is allocated approximately 10.5% of the €13.12 billion health budget. This funding is providing Disability Services throughout the country and is spent in line with nationally agreed policy for disability services whilst at the same time endeavouring to maximise value.

The National Association of Housing for the Visually Impaired

The National Association of Housing for Visually Impaired (NAHVI) was set up to address the long term housing needs of young people with a visual impairment who may also have an additional
disability for example a learning, hearing or physical disability and those who have complex needs as a result of social, cultural, economic or emotional factors.

NAHVI is funded by the HSE under Section 39 of the Health Act, 2004. The following table provides information on the level of funding provided to the National Association of Housing for the Visually Impaired in the years from 2011 – 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Association of Housing for the Visually Impaired</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€472,309</td>
<td>€446,332</td>
<td>€467,062</td>
<td>€467,062</td>
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</tbody>
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The HSE recognises the valuable contribution the NAHVI provides to people with a visual impairment. However, the Health Service as a whole has to operate within the parameters of funding available to it and given the current economic environment; this has become a major challenge for all stakeholders, including the HSE, voluntary service providers, services users and their families.

**HIQA Standards**

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is the independent Authority which has been established to drive continuous improvement in Ireland's health and social care services. HIQA developed the National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities, to assist service providers to assess the quality of service they provide in advance of inspection. They also act as a guide to individuals and families as to what they can reasonably expect of a residential service.

From 1 November 2013, HIQA assumed responsible for the process of registration, inspection and monitoring against these Standards and the legal Regulations published by Government. All centres providing residential (including respite) services to children and adults with disabilities now need to be registered with HIQA by law and will be visited by HIQA inspectors to ensure they are providing an appropriate standard of care.

I understand that the Department of Health has addressed your query in relation to Statutory Instrument 366 of 2013 [Article 10(2)], which addresses the payment of annual fees by persons who carry on the business of a designated centre and who provide residential services in accordance with Section 69 of the Health Act 2007. The application of these regulations is a matter for HIQA.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Meany,
Head of Operations and Service Improvement,
Disability Services, Social Care Division