



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

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19<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Deputy Peter Burke,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
e-mail: [peter.burke@oireachtas.ie](mailto:peter.burke@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Burke,

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 50946/19**

*To ask the Minister for Health his plans to address the ageing transport fleet used to support persons with intellectual disabilities in view of the fact that over 550 vehicles are ten years or older; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

#### **HSE Response**

The provision of transport services is not part of core services within disability services. As a general rule public transport should be used in all circumstances where it is an option. This is in keeping with the principle of mainstreaming, with a clear focus on ensuring persons with a disability have access to the normal range of services and participate in community life as far as possible. It must be noted that in general service users are in receipt of disability allowance and are automatically entitled to the Free Travel Pass; so there should be no additional cost burden at an individual level.

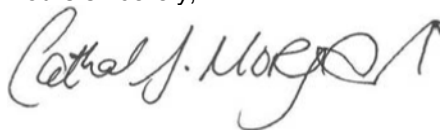
While there isn't a statutory requirement to provide patient transport services, it is acknowledged that some transport supports are provided by the HSE or funded agencies on a discretionary basis; and that without this support many people with disabilities would not be able to access services.

The HSE has liaised with the National Transport Authority and disability service providers to explore ways in which the Authority's services could assist people with disabilities. The National Transport Authority has a total of 17 Transport co-ordinating units called Local Link. These provide a safe secure and reliable Public Transport services in local and rural areas of Ireland, through a combination of scheduled Public Transport services and door-to-door services.

The HSE is also working with the National Transport Authority to carry out a national survey of existing transport provision within disability services, to identify: the extent of transport provision available within disability services, the current cost of the provision, any gaps in provision, and make recommendations for better use of existing resources. The HSE was successful in securing Dormant Account Monies to fund this project which will map all Disability transport routes nationally. A number of meetings were held with the Department of Transport, NTA and Jacobs (the company secured by the NTA to carry out the project work). A Presentation was made by the NTA and Jacobs to the National Consultative Forum members. Following on from this, meetings were held with the three Umbrella Organisations (National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, Inclusion Ireland and the Disability Federation of Ireland) to present an overview of the project and a number of Disability Organisations

volunteered to pilot the route mapping exercise in advance of the Project going live nationally. The HSE is supporting the project through the provision of administrative backup.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathal J. Morgan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Dr. Cathal Morgan,  
Head of Operations - Disability Services,  
Community Operations**