

8th November 2019

Deputy Jonathan O'Brien
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ 44045/19

“To ask the Minister for Health the additional funding which will be given to a group (details supplied) in view of the growth in the number of clients served by the group; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy O'Brien,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

COPE Foundation is a Section 38 organisation which is funded by Cork Kerry Community Healthcare to provide a range of services and supports to children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities and autism. Services and supports are provided across a range of areas including residential, respite, day services, rehabilitation training, home supports and early intervention. Cork Kerry Community Healthcare (CKCH) provides funding through the Service Level Agreement process and the organisation was allocated funding of €63,810,903 in 2019.

In common with a large number of providers of residential services across Cork and Kerry, COPE face challenges in relation to demand for residential placements, as well as the challenges of implementing the move away from traditional congregated settings to community living arrangements. COPE provide residential supports for 435 people, of which 356 would be classified as living in congregated settings, in that there are more than four people living in the house. Of the 356 people who live in congregated settings, 312 people live in houses of ten or more people. The HSE policy on 'Time to Move from Congregated Settings' sets out that people with disabilities should be supported to live in houses that do not exceed four people, However substantial capital resources are required to address this. In 2018 one house was funded by Cork Kerry Community Healthcare for decongregation of the Ashville service within COPE which has been prioritised for decongregation. This house, for four people, successfully opened in Carrigaline, however the organisation has not received any further capital funding to support decongregation. CKCH is working with COPE on the continued decongregation of the Ashville site and has received competitive funding through the Service Reform Programme for a Community Transition Coordinator to support residents to move to the community, as well as a Project Manager (with responsibility for an additional two projects). However no additional capital or revenue has been allocated for decongregation within COPE Foundation.

COPE also report a significant waiting list for people requiring residential supports. They and are working with Cork Kerry Community Healthcare through the Framework for the Management of Residential Supports (including Emergency Placements in HSE Community Healthcare Organisations) which established a Residential Placement Management Committee and the Disability Services Management Assessment Tool (DSAMT) to identify those in need of a residential placement. Whilst figures are being finalised through engagement between COPE and CKCH, it is estimated that this figure is in the region of 170 people. The Residential Placement Management Committee is also developing a multiannual plan and is working with providers, including COPE Foundation to identify current and projected future needs for disability services in Cork and Kerry.

Each provider is in the late stages of setting out their initial plans to address unmet need within their organisations. COPE are participating in this group and are working with CKCH on completion of same. However, it should be noted that whilst this is a progressive step for CKCH and service

providers no funding has been allocated for multiannual planning within the CHO. While funding is not available at this time to implement this plan, this work will ensure that Cork Kerry Community Healthcare are prepared to respond to any additional funding that becomes available in 2020 and subsequent years. This lack of multiannual planning allocation makes service development and planning for current unmet and projected future needs a challenging and difficult process.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare received no development funding for 2019 for additional residential places in a planned and systematic way. We received a financial allocation of €1.6m in respect of emergency cases for 2019. This allocation was utilised to meet urgent crisis needs for residential care, for additional home supports as an alternative to residential care, or to provide additional supports where people in residential care have increased needs and cannot continue to be supported within that setting with the current level of supports. It is important to note that Cork Kerry Community Healthcare continues to receive a large volume of applications for funding of supports on an on-going basis across all voluntary providers. All requests for emergency funding are recorded and managed through the Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSMAT), which serves to ensure that the application process is equitable and transparent. The process that follows involves a prioritisation by of the applications for approval based on the funding available and the complexity of the cases presenting, within the resources available.

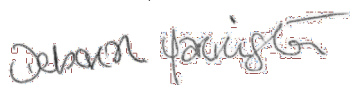
In terms of respite provision COPE face challenges in that there is a significant and increasing demand for respite services and lack of capacity around the provision of respite services, in particular for adults. They currently have 116 adult respite placements available and 48 people on the waiting list for respite. COPE have also articulated an interest in developing services around development of home support and alternative respite which require multiannual funding.

The final budget for Cork Kerry Community Healthcare has not yet been finalised for 2020 however it is clear at this stage that the level of funding likely to be available to the HSE at national level will not be sufficient to meet the level of needs that exist among people with disabilities for residential care. Information on the numbers who needs services has been given to the Department of Health and the Department of Expenditure and Public Reform in recent years. The known level of need currently exceeds the funding available, hence, every application is considered in the context of the limited resources available, the emergency cases availing of our services and the complexities of the cases being addressed at present. This funding will be prioritised towards the cases of greatest need. Unfortunately this level of funding did not enable service providers to meet all of the needs presenting in 2019. This deficit reflects the growing population of people with disabilities, longer life expectancy and more complex needs presenting, along with the lack of structured investment in residential and home supports over a number of years.

Cork Kerry Community Healthcare are acutely aware of the pressure experienced by many families and we are working with service providers and with the HSE at national level to ensure that the needs in this area continue to be highlighted in the Estimates and budget planning process.

I trust this clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Deborah Harrington,
General Manager Disability Services Cork North,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare.