



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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11th December 2020

Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: pearse.doherty@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Doherty,

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: 40503/20

To ask the Minister for Health the status of and position regarding the restoration of full-time disability day services; when these services will resume a five day week service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

In line with public health guidance, at the outset of the pandemic, adult day services, along with many other services, were significantly reduced to limit exposure to COVID-19.

The HSE acknowledges the impact and effects of the closure of day centres for adults with disabilities during the current COVID-19 pandemic and is fully cognisant of the stress this can cause to people with disabilities and their families.

To mitigate the difficulties, the HSE engaged with providers to ensure that where possible, some level of service was maintained, based on prioritising those with the greatest needs. In this respect, Providers continued to provide outreach supports to people in the greatest need and some supports were provided at service locations and in service user homes.

Prior to the onset of COVID 19 there were approximately 19,000 adults in receipt of day service supports throughout the country.

Day service locations closed in mid-March but service supports continued for day service recipients albeit in a different way. In that regard reports for June showed:-

- Almost 5,000 of these adults received a full 24/7 service which includes individualised supports
- A further 4,000 adults received face to face supports albeit at a reduced level (Covid safety)
- Of the 1,000 day service locations nationally, HSE funded day services continued to provide supports at almost 300 locations to support people who were in a priority category with families under significant pressure.

All day service locations have reopened since August /September with exception to 7 locations that are currently being used as COVID-19 Isolation/Test centres. In respect of these 7 locations, replacements are being sourced and in the meantime service users are receiving outreach supports.

The capacity in day service locations has been reduced in line with Public Health Guidance. At end of September approximately 4,500 adults that also receive residential services were receiving supports for 24 hour x 7 days weekly or 100% service. The remaining day service users were receiving in excess of 40% service quantum. Since September €12.5m additional funding has been provided to try and increase capacity to 60% service. €7.5m of this funding is to secure additional posts to enhance the capacity in day service locations. €5m of the funding is to source and make ready additional service locations and to increase the capacity on transport to enable more people attend locations each day. Posts are currently being recruited and buildings are being secured and made ready to enhance the service quantum. Additional transport supports are in place.

In addition, €30m has been provided for 2021 to fund the additional posts employed in 2020 to maintain an increased level of service as we continue to live with COVID-19 restrictions. The full positive impact of the additional funding should be realised in the early months of 2021.

The HSE and Service Providers recognise the critical need and importance of disability supports for people and their families. The impact of COVID-19 on people's lives has and continues to be very significant. Our collective aim is to restore services in a safe way and in line with the very significant investment made by the State and funded agencies and we will continue to work with service users and their families/carers to ensure that we achieve this aim.

Reference is drawn to the following HSE weblink which provides updates and guidance for disability service providers, including 'service resumption planning guidance':

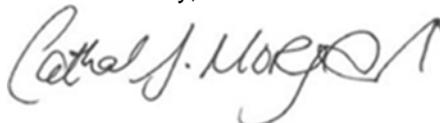
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

Attention is also drawn to the following important web links which provides up to date information resources in respect of COVID-19:

www.hspc.ie

<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

Yours sincerely,



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