



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

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

Office of the Head of Operations,  
Disability Services/Social Care Division,  
31-33 Catherine Street, Limerick.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369

Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

29<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Deputy Pauline Tully,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie](mailto:pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Tully,

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 42970/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the baseline unit cost for formal out-of-home respite services; the baseline unit cost for formal in-home respite; the baseline unit cost for recreation and holiday respite breaks; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

#### **HSE Response**

The manner in which funding is allocated/distributed allows for a distinction between broad categories of funding such as services for older people, Primary Care and disabilities in general. Disability services are provided based on the needs of an individual rather than by the actual type of disability or service required. In this context, as respite services are provided according to each person's individual unique needs and set of circumstances, information on baseline unit costs for respite services is not available.

However, we can say that in 2020, funding allocated to respite services amounted to approximately €70 million and represents about 3% of total funding. Prior to the public health emergency with regard to COVID-19 and in accordance with the National Service Plan 2020, the HSE was committed to provide 33,712 day only respite sessions and 166,183 nights (with or without day respite) to people with disabilities in 2020. In addition, the HSE committed to provide 144 intensive transitional support packages for children and young people with complex / high support needs, to include planned residential respite interventions and access to planned extended day / weekend and summer day based activities.

While this funding is not routinely collated and aggregated into a statistical profile, in 2018, the Minister for Health announced an additional €10 million for the HSE, specifically to enhance respite care in the disability sector. In accordance with the National Service Plan for 2018, the HSE committed to providing:

- An additional respite house in each of the nine CHO areas which will support 450 individuals in a full year and 251 in 2018 (€5m).
- Three additional respite houses in the greater Dublin areas (CHOs 7, 8 and 9) to support a further 225 individuals in a full year and 143 in 2018 (€3m).
- Alternative models of respite to support 250 individuals with disability (€2m).

The funding provided for the equivalent of 12 new houses, 1 in each CHO, and 3 in the Greater Dublin area. This resulted in an additional 6,455 bed nights delivered to 763 people.

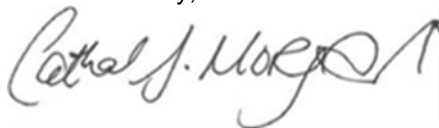
Alternative respite in the form of summer camps, evening and Saturday clubs were also put in place, benefiting hundreds of adults and children. Community-Based, alternative respite projects delivered 15,144 'in home' Respite Hours, to 400 users and 1,296 Saturday/Evening/Holiday Club 'sessions' to 1,500 people.

The HSE and disability service providers recognise the critical need and importance of disability supports for people with disabilities and is very much aware of the importance of respite service provision for the families of both children and adults with disabilities, including the impact the absence of respite service provision can have on other services. The impact of COVID-19 on people's lives has and continues to be very significant. Our collective aim is to restore services and ensure continuity of services in a safe way and in line with the very significant investment made by the State and funded agencies.

In this context, we welcome the recent announcements from the Government of additional funding for Disability Services:

- An additional €100 million secured for Disability Services in the recent budget. The specific breakdown of this investment will be discussed as part of the normal service planning process and will be detailed in the National Service Plan. However, the HSE anticipates that significant funding will be allocated for the development of additional Respite Services.
- €10 million is being made available to support the resumption of day services and enhanced home support services for disability service users. The €10 million funding is being drawn down from the National Action Plan on COVID-19 - €7.5 million will increase the level of day service provision and €2.5 million will provide intensive support packages for children and young people with complex/high support needs.
- €20 million in one-off grants will be provided to reform disability services, build the capacity of disability organisations and to improve the quality of life of those who rely on these services.
- €7.8 million has been allocated by Sláintecare to facilitate the HSE and its funded service providers to address the overdue Assessments of Need

Yours sincerely,



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