



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,
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28th July 2020

Deputy Gino Kenny,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: gino.kenny@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Kenny,

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 16371/20

To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that disability service providers have not received extra funding to cover the costs of deep cleaning, sanitising and other associated Covid-19 hygiene protocols as they begin to resume their services for persons with disabilities; if extra funding will be provided in the interest of public health to organisations providing these services; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The HSE works in partnership with organisations including Section 38, Section 39, Out of State and For Profit organisations to ensure the best level of service possible is provided to people with a disability, and their families, within the available resources. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.

The HSE acknowledges the role and contribution of non-statutory agencies in the development and provision of health and personal social services

In addition, the HSE would like to acknowledge the contribution of and engagement between Service Providers and the HSE during the COVID -19 pandemic.

It is anticipated that there will be cost pressures in respect of facilities modification, PPE expenses, and potential increased staffing costs to mitigate against activity delivery restrictions inherent with working alongside the continued presence of COVID-19 in the short to medium term and maintaining the prevailing social distancing and infection prevention and control requirements.

During the public health emergency, the HSE developed and circulated Financial Guidance re COVID Related Expenditure & Section 38/39 Provider Organisations, the purpose of which is to provide guidance to CHOs regarding potential service and related financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for providers delivering 'essential' or 'core' Health and Social Care services during the COVID-19 Emergency Response. Please note that the guidance is temporary and remains applicable for the duration of the emergency only.

Supports provided by CHOs to S39 organisations during the period from March to May 2020 include the following:

- PPE continues to be provided to all funded agencies.
- Infection Prevention and Control support, advice and training continues.
- Public Health advice/support is ongoing with regard to suspected/positive cases.
- Residential Preparedness Groups
- Facilitating the testing of all residential staff.
- A COVID response Team to assist and support residential service providers. This team will now oversee and support the reshaping of disability services as a result of COVID 19.
- Funding for emergency residential placements
- A weekly or now bi-weekly call/forum with all funded agencies to support them throughout the duration of the crisis
- Accommodation;
- Logistics in the form of transport.

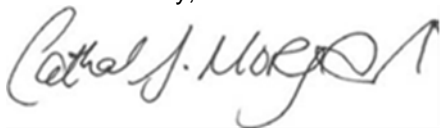
With regard to funding, CHOs are having ongoing discussions in general with some of the S39 organisations in their areas. While additional funding has been agreed in some areas, in the main, additional funding has yet to be disbursed in this regard as a period of review, analysis and validation is required to determine the legitimate necessity for additional funding above 2020 pre-COVID agreed levels.

Roadmap for Recovery

Since the publication of the Government's 'Roadmap for reopening Society and Business' as well as the 'Return to work safely' protocol, the HSE is finalising plans to re-establish vital non-covid supports and services. This includes very careful and detailed work on the part of the Disability Sector with national guidance and will result in directing how all funded agencies can deliver services on a medium to long-term basis. In effect this means that the HSE is setting out its plans in terms of how we can safely begin to commence services. These will have to comply with guidance as set out by the National Public Health Emergency Team as well as Public Health specialists in the HSE. The HSE continues to support the two-metre social distancing guidance as advocated by the National Public Health Emergency Team

It is acknowledged that the safe reopening of Disability Services and Supports will require cultural and behavioural changes to previous work practices that will involve the implementation of strict and effective social distancing measures, the use of PPE as required and where social distancing measures cannot be applied and additional hygiene and cleaning controls to those previously used in accordance with existing Infection Control and Hand Hygiene Policies. Implementation of these changes will vary for each location.

Yours sincerely,



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