

7th August 2020

Deputy Thomas Gould,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ 19478/20

“To ask the Minister for Health the number of day care centres for persons with intellectual disabilities in north central areas of County Cork that have submitted applications for funding in order to reopen; the amount required; the amount allocated to date by his Department; the amount that will be allocated; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Gould,

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.

Regrettably, due to Covid 19 crisis, many services such as Day Services across Cork and Kerry were severely impacted and resulted in either services ceasing operations on a temporary basis or services being offered in an alternative way to endeavour to support clients and families presenting with the highest risk.

It is important to note that the COVID-19 crisis has impacted on the way in which services are currently delivered. The Disability Services have been working with our service providers to ensure the safe delivery of services as they resume, taking account of public health and infection control requirements. We are currently planning for reinstatement of services in line with the government roadmap on reopening the country along with the guidance from public health and infection control. The reinstatement requires extensive planning and needs to factor in the complexities and vulnerabilities of the people we support. This guidance will require services to be delivered differently to support people's needs taking account of the maximum capacity achievable within children's services and day services to allow for continued social distancing measures to be observed within the challenges and restrictions arising from the presence of Covid 19 in Ireland. The Disability Services and service providers will engage with service users and their families to plan for these changes.

Disability Services have asked the Agencies to work within their existing levels of funding for now, to focus their efforts on the resumption of their services, and to establish what is the maximum level of service they can deliver from their existing staff structures and funding levels within guidelines in order to determine what gap in service delivery is arising and to identify what additional funding might be required. At this point in time, we continue to work through these plans with the service providers in an effort to resume day services throughout August and September 2020.

Disability Services is acutely aware that the Covid pandemic and cancellation of services has resulted in significant stressors being placed on families and individuals with disabilities across Cork Kerry Community Healthcare. We continue to engage with our Service Providers to ensure that where possible, some level of service is maintained, based on prioritising those with the greatest

needs. Additionally, a new national portal will be launched in the coming days which will detail the day services that will open and services available within each location. This will provide further clarification for people with disabilities and their families.

I trust this clarifies the situation for you.

Yours sincerely



**Ms. Jackie Daly,
Interim Head of Disability Services,
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare**