



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
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31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

Deputy David Cullinane,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House, Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 19984/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the status of the programme for decongregation; the number that remain in institutional settings; the timeline or estimated time frame for completion; the estimated cost of completing the programme by capital and current costs; the annual breakdown of same in each of the years 2017 to 2019 and to date in 2020; and the amount required in 2021 and going forward*

#### **HSE Response**

##### **A Time to Move on from Congregated Settings**

In June 2011 the Report “Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A Strategy for Community Inclusion” was published, which identified that in 2008 approximately 4,000 individuals with disabilities lived in congregated type settings, defined as where ten or more people reside in a single living unit or are campus based. It found that notwithstanding the commitment and initiative of dedicated staff and management, that there were a significant number of people still experiencing institutional living conditions where they lacked basic privacy and dignity, and lived their lives apart from any community and family.

The report initially recommended a seven year timeframe for the implementation of the policy and the 2016 Programme for Government identified that there should be a one- third reduction in the number of individuals residing on congregated settings by the year 2021, which reflects the continued commitment of the Government to the policy of decongregation, whilst acknowledging that the process of supporting each person to transition from a congregated setting to a community based service in a sustainable and safe way, requires planning and time.

##### **Status of congregated Settings**

The target for de-congregation for 2020 was set at 132, and 40 people transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community in Q1 2020. Time to Move On from Congregated Settings is progressing and continues to demonstrate very positive results for service users who have transitioned to living in homes in community settings. Overall, the population in congregated settings is 50% lower than those identified in the original report; 16 Centres have been fully de-congregated and

now there are less than 2,000 people remaining in congregated settings (please see Infographic in Appendix 1 showing progress made under Time to Move on from Congregated Settings policy up to 1/1/2020).

- A total of 945 people have completed their transition to the community by 01/01/2020
- 6 centres have closed completely and now support residents entirely in the community
- There are 19 centres that now have less than 10 people remaining in the setting/campus.
- There are 1,494 residents (76%) now living in units with no more than nine other people and of this 343 residents (18%) are living in units with no more than three others.
- There are only 13 campus's with more than 50 residents remaining compared to 24 settings in 2012.
- In 2012 the largest campus was home to 227 residents and the largest residential building was home to 112 people. Currently, the largest campus has 145 residents and the largest residential building has 28 residents.

Pointedly, the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the stark reality of the risk to health that living in a congregated setting can present for the residents. The vast majority of people with disabilities living in the residential services now live in small group homes with no more than nine others.

### **Resources committed by HSE under this Programme**

#### ***Multi Annual Capital Funding 2016-2021***

In 2016 the DOH announced €100million in capital funding to be allocated to the HSE over a six-year period from 2016-2021 specifically for the provision of housing in order to enable progress to be made in the decongregation of a number of priority sites. The breakdown of the Congregated Settings (€100m programme) spend from 2016 is as follows:

2016: €9.93m  
2017: €15.76m  
2018: €10.26m  
2019: €8.89m  
2020: €4.68m to date, projected €15m

#### ***Service Reform Fund 2016-2019***

A Service Reform Fund was also agreed between Atlantic Philanthropies, the DoH, the HSE and Genio Trust targeted to provide transitional revenue resources to support the transition to person-centred models of services and support in prioritised centres. A total of €27million was allocated to the identified priority settings over the period 2016-2019.

#### ***Revenue for HIQA Compliance 2016***

In 2016 a very significant investment in disability services of €62m was made to Improve Compliance with National Residential Standards as Regulated by HIQA. This investment supported the full year costs of the compliance work and emergency places approved by the HSE and commenced in 2015, along with the accelerated implementation of A Time to Move on from Congregated Settings in respect of residential centres where compliance could not be achieved.

#### ***Targeted Additional Revenue for decongregation***

Additional ongoing revenue resources in the region of €60million were also invested across three of the priority congregated sites to address identified critical core funding deficits. The allocation of this additional revenue funding was contingent on the services substantially progressing the decongregation targets and addressing HIQA compliance issues.

### **Time frame and Potential Challenges**

The HSE welcomes the commitment in the new Programme for Government to the continuation of the successful decongregation programme and commits to a further move of people with disabilities from congregated settings to homes in the community, with the necessary supports.

Over the past two years, progress has been slowed by challenges in the housing market in identifying, acquiring, and converting suitable accommodation in the community. While it is not expected that the demand for housing will ease off in the foreseeable future, in order to overcome these challenges, the HSE is continuing with the programme of sourcing suitable accommodation through its own Estates Management unit and through commissioning a number of specialised housing providers.

Yours sincerely,



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

## Progress made under the Time to Move on from Congregated Settings Policy up to 01/01/2020

