



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>

15th June 2020

Deputy Aindrinas Moynihan,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: aindrinas.moynihan@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

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 8896/20

To ask the Minister for Health his plans for implementation and expansion of ASD and disability services for persons over 18 years of age; the subsidised transport options that can be made available to those over 18 years of age with a disability that cannot avail of their free travel entitlement due to not being able to use the bus service on their own and that no other option is available to them; if his attention has been drawn to the fact these persons may be living at home with aged parents and require an alternative transport option available to them to enable their attendance at daycare and learning facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The HSE has been requested by the Department of Health to respond to the Deputy in relation to the first part of this Parliamentary Question, namely the implementation and expansion of ASD and Disability Services for persons over 18 years of age.

Pre COVID-19

At the beginning of 2020 the HSE Disability Services was allocated c. €2 billion. This funding is providing Disability Services throughout the country to all persons with physical, sensory, intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder.

The funding reflected an incremental increase in the provision of funding to the Disability Service in the previous years. Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the anticipated service activity levels that were expected to be delivered commensurate with this substantial state investment included.

- Provide 8,358 residential places
- Provide adult day services and supports for in excess of 23,000 adults with physical and sensory disabilities, intellectual disability and autism in over 950 service locations throughout the country
- Identify approximately 1,600 young people due to leave school or rehabilitative training and provide approximately 1,200 new placements in 2020 to meet their needs
- Deliver home support and PA hours to approximately 10,000 people with disabilities including an additional 40,000 PA hours in 2020
- Provide an additional 56 new emergency residential placements



Building a Better Health Service

CARE COMPASSION TRUST LEARNING

- Provide eight appropriate residential places for people currently living in respite care as an emergency response to their needs, while also freeing up the vacated respite accommodation for future use
- Provide 144 intensive transitional support packages for children and young people with complex / high support needs focusing on families experiencing substantial levels of support need, but who do not require a high cost long term placement. Specifically, this new development initiative is the pre-crisis intervention stage and will include:
 - intensive in-home visiting supports
 - planned residential respite interventions
 - specialist behavioural support interventions
 - access to planned extended day / weekend and summer day based activities
- Provide 166,183 nights (with or without day respite) to people with disabilities.

The HSE also welcomed the announcement of an additional €30.5m for Disability Services in the recent published National Service Plan, including:

- €12.5m for school leavers
- €6m for disability needs assessments
- €2m for autism services.
- €5m for emergency residential protocols
- €5m for respite services

In preparing for and responding to COVID-19 and to fully align with Public Health guidance as recommended via the NPHET, the HSE and its partner service providers put in place a range of measures, which included the prioritisation of vital residential and home support services whilst curtailing or closing certain services such as day services, respite services, and certain clinical supports in order to; a) prioritise essential public health services at CHO level and b) ensure continued delivery of the referenced residential and home supports provision.

in the absence of regular access to some service and supports, CHOs and service providers tried to maintain services that can be delivered safely; providing outreach and telecare solutions, using technology where possible; and using creative and innovative models of care to support service users, both adults and children.

Roadmap for Reopening

Processes are underway in order to plan for the reintroduction of non-Covid services. In that regard the HSE has now developed a number of important guidance documents to assist disability services. These are as follows:

1. Framework for Resumption of Adult Day Services;
2. Reshaping Disability Services From 2020 & Beyond

These are now available on the following website:

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

It is important to note that the above guidance is interim and subject to change in line with the overall management of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with contemporary Public Health Guidance;

The HSE continues to plan the re-establishment of 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. Plans have to comply with guidance as set out by the National Public Health Emergency Team as well as Public Health specialists in the HSE.

In addition the Disability Sector is re-establishing a number of structures including the National Consultative Forum as well as other operational structures that will co-ordinate and support the sector as we continue to

navigate this pandemic and make every effort to deliver supports and services in line with Public Health Guidance.

With regard to Adult Day Services, a National Group representative of service users and families, Service Providers and HSE are working together to prepare for the resumption of day service supports in line with COVID-19 guidance.

The HSE and its partner Service Providers will also continue to communicate with school-leavers and their families to plan and organise for September. Staff and Service User training will be made available.

It is expected that a clearer picture will emerge before end of June as to when day services are likely to be reinstated and how the service will be delivered taking account of Public Health Guidance and COVID-19 restrictions.

Review of Irish Health Services for Autistic people.

In addition to the above anticipated service activity, it should be noted that the HSE is also implementing recommendations arising from the *Review of the Irish Health Services for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (2018)*.

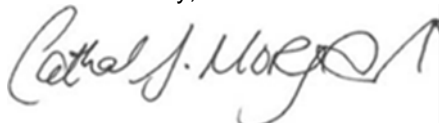
This programme of capacity building and public awareness has a budget of €2m of new investment specific to the needs of this vulnerable group.

In accordance with the National Service Plan, the additional funding secured will be used in a number of priority areas:

- To implement a programme of awareness raising that can provide a better information resource for children and parents about what supports are available;
- To deliver a campaign to assist in creating awareness of the challenges, needs and experiences of people with autism;
- To build capacity and competence amongst key professionals working with autism – including a national training programme for clinicians and the implementation of a tiered model of assessment in order to improve access to and responses by services for those with ASD.

The HSE's ASD Programme Board has begun work to implement the recommendations of the Review that includes a more streamlined clinical pathway for service users; collaborative working with parents; tiered assessment; more structured transition planning and ASD training for staff.

Yours sincerely,



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