



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

25th September 2020

Deputy Marc MacSharry,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
e-mail: marc.macsharry@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy MacSharry,

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 24069/20

To ask the Minister for Health if the disability section of the HSE website will be updated to provide more detailed information on management and supports to include policies or guidance relating to disability services for those living independently in their own homes and provide links to accessible information in plain and easy English versions which describe each specific service; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

The HSE provides access to information on a wide range of HSE services and HSE funded services that are provided to people with disabilities and the support that is available to them and their families, through its website – www.hse.ie – and various publications.

The Disability Services section of the HSE Website provides detailed information on a range of community care services, including home support, personal assistance, psychological services, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, social work services, physiotherapy, daycare and respite services. There is a link to accessing these services for each of the HSE Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) Areas.

The website also provides details of the significant programme of reform under Transforming Lives, which is informing new models of service provision within Disability Services. This includes Time to Move on from Congregated Settings, which supports the transition of people from institutional settings to community-based living and the New Directions programme, which is improving day services and aims to meet the needs of school leavers and young people graduating from rehabilitation training.

Just recently, the HSE went live with a web-portal providing details on the re-opening of disability day services throughout the country that were closed or curtailed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has proved a huge success for service users and their families and carers. It provides information on the services opening in each CHO location and details the number of service users that will use the location on a daily basis. This web-portal is updated regularly and can be accessed at the following link:

www.hse.ie/newdirections

The HSE website also hosts a range of guidance material in all formats – easy read; plain English; webinars and youtube video links - developed to support people with disabilities, families and staff during COVID-19. These include;

- Alternative Models of Support (Non-Residential);
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for People with Disabilities and Carers;
- Streamlined Health Passport for people with disabilities who are admitted to hospital;
- Guidance on Use of PPE in Disability Services;
- Guidance for supporting adults in a community residence/at home;
- Guidance of supporting children in a community residence/at home;
- Support coordination in a pandemic; practical checklist to avoid stressors for service users;
- Interim Guidance on Conducting Assessments in Disability Services;
- Guidance to Support the Resumption of Children’s Disability Services.

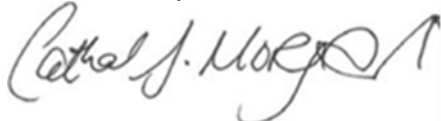
The FAQ, in particular, explained the pathway for supports for family carers and included dedicated guidance and advice on a range of issues relating to COVID-19 together with a list of local and national helpline numbers. All of this guidance material can be accessed at the following link:

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

In addition, the HSE also supports and funds many voluntary and community organisations whose main focus is advocacy and information. This includes support for on-line resources that provide appropriate, up-to-date, accessible and accurate information to service users and their families and carers. The HSE website provides links to a range of relevant websites and on-line resources that host important and useful guidance and resources for people with disabilities that have been developed by Voluntary Service Providers; Statutory Bodies and Government.

The HSE continuously looks to update and develop its website in order to improve access to information and supports for people with disabilities and is committed to working with all voluntary service providers and agencies to continue to plan and develop services, including information and advocacy services, within resources available to it, in order to address the needs of all people with disabilities

Yours sincerely,



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