



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>

16th December 2021

Deputy Pauline Tully,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: pauline.tully@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Tully,

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: 59472/21

To ask the Minister for Health the achievements to date in relation to the decongregation of large residential institutions for persons with disabilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

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.

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 1,800 people remaining in congregated settings:

- A total of 945 people had 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.

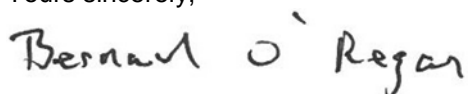


Pointedly, the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the stark reality of the risk to health that living in a congregated setting can present for the residents. The vast majority of people with disabilities living in the residential services now live in small group homes with no more than nine others.

The target for de-congregation for 2020 was set at 132, and 126 people had transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community by year end.

The target for de-congregation for 2021 was set at 144. A total of 79 people transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community up to end Q3 2021. We understand from conversations with the CHO Areas and Service Providers that there are a significant number of people planned to transition in Quarter 4 and we are hopeful of meeting the NSP target by year end. Work remains on-going to address the key challenges arising in relation to the procurement of appropriate housing in a buoyant housing market, and the undertaking of necessary works to ensure HIQA compliance – which must be secured before any new facility can become operational.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard O'Regan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Bernard O'Regan
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations