

05<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Deputy Matt Carthy  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**PQ ref 60206/22 - To ask the Minister for Health the criteria outlined in the statement of purpose for children to be approved for respite care in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Carthy

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Donegal respite services cater for persons with intellectual disability, including those persons with physical disability and/or autism. Respite services are provided to children only when they are over six years of age.

Referrals for respite are received via the Donegal Intellectual Disability Service (IDS) Referral Team, which meets bi-monthly. All referrals to Donegal IDS are processed through the referral pathway outlined in the Guidelines on Admissions (including Unplanned Admissions) to Residential, Day Centre and Respite Services within Donegal Intellectual Disability Services.

Anyone wishing to avail of the service must meet the following eligibility criteria for IDS in Donegal:

- Be resident or plan to be resident in Co. Donegal
- Have a psychological assessment confirming intellectual disability
- Be registered or eligible to be registered on the National Intellectual Disability Database (Health Research Board Manual 2011)
- Special considerations are made only on the recommendation of the IDS Referral Team.

The only exception to the above would be a situation where it is necessary to move a person into the service on an emergency basis. All requests for emergency admission must be immediately referred to the Director of Nursing or designated senior nurse on duty for the area. In addition to the criteria outlined in the Guideline's Eligibility for Intellectual Disability Services, the following emergency criteria must be present, i.e. there must be a crisis or emergency due to the following:

- Illness/hospitalisation or death of carer
- Family or carer having difficulty in managing a service user's behaviour within the home where there is potential or actual risk of physical assault/injury to main carer or there is a safeguarding issue for a person vulnerable to abuse or neglect
- Unforeseen changes in domestic circumstances which result in a crisis situation for the service user, e.g. family breakdown, death of family member.



I trust that this is of assistance but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Edel Quinn'.

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**Edel Quinn**  
**Head of Service Disability CH CDLMS**  
**Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas**  
**Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar CDLMS**