



**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.

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12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Deputy Sean Sherlock,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [sean.sherlock@oireachtas.ie](mailto:sean.sherlock@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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: 61209/22**

*To ask the Minister for Health the number of children referred on from CDNs to private providers for assessment and therapy; the number in each CHO; the therapies concerned; and the cost for each private provider referral in tabular form.*

**HSE Response**

The HSE acknowledges the challenges in meeting the demand for children's disability services and is acutely conscious of how this impacts on children and their families.

Children with disabilities access a range of health and social care services. The appropriate service is identified based on their presenting needs and may be through Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs), Primary Care, or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

In line with the PDS model, resources assigned to children's disability services are allocated to the CDNTs; 91 CDNTs are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work and others. The team works closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child's and family's own priorities.

Since 2019, more than 610 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned to teams based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area. This figure includes the 190 posts provided in 2022 as well as the recently agreed funding for an additional 136.3 WTEs to restore pre-existing services in 104 special schools.

These additional posts are intended to support the newly established CDNTs to prioritise intervention

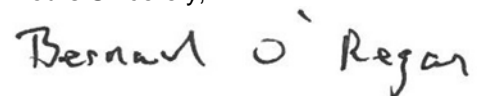


for children with complex needs in special schools.

CDNTs do not routinely refer children to private providers. On occasion and in line with appropriate procurement procedures, Garda vetting and due diligence practice, Lead Agencies may contract private providers to provide assessments and / or interventions. In such instances, the Lead Agency must ensure that the contracted providers are appropriately qualified and that any assessments or interventions are provided in line with the appropriate standards.

Information regarding the number of children with disabilities who have been referred to private providers for assessment and intervention is not collated centrally.

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.

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

