



**Leas Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta: Pleanáil Athraithe agus Seachadadh -
Seirbhísí Míchumais agus Meabhairshláinte.**

**Assistant National Director: Change Planning and Delivery –
Disability and Mental Health Services.**

HSE | Block D,
Parkgate Business Centre,
Parkgate Street, Dublin D08 YFF1.

T: 01 6352574
Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

21st December 2022

Deputy Alan Kelly,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: alan.kelly@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Kelly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 61522/22

To ask the Minister for Health when HIQA remit will be extended to disability day services

PQ: 61523/22

To ask the Minister for Health when an independent body will be appointed to regulate and investigate disability day services (details supplied).

Details supplied: There is currently no official independent body to investigate instances of failings in the duty of care to people with disabilities attending adult day services. When these instances arise family carers have to address these issues directly with their service provider. However, the investigations carried out by the service provider can be biased and often no result or reason to the failure of care is identified leaving family carers with no resolution and a high chance of the same issues arising again.

HSE Response

The HSE's approach to supporting adults with disabilities who use day services in Ireland, is enshrined in the policy, *New Directions*, which proposes that 'day services' should take the form of individualised outcome-focussed supports to allow adults using those services to live a life of their choosing in accordance with their own wishes, needs and aspirations.

There is a structure set up within the nine HSE Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) nationally to implement *New Directions*. Each day centre provides its own programme and the type of support may differ from centre to centre. However, activities and support offered include, but are not limited to, day programmes which are essentially a support and therapeutic service designed to meet



the needs of people through individual plans. The environment is designed to maximise the functional levels of service users. Day programmes provide a range of skills and activities such as independent living skills, personal development, education classes, social and recreational activities, and health-related and therapy supports.

People with disabilities, their families, carers and advocates have been actively engaged in the planning and review of the "New Directions" programme. They are clear that they want to do worthwhile things that fit with their interests and aspirations for their lives. Training and work are very important to them. They want to do ordinary things in ordinary places and to be part of their community. They want support to be independent and they want to be able to make choices and plans for their lives. They also want to have the support they need to do that. People want to have a say about what happens in the service they attend, to help shape policy and to influence how services are run.

Currently almost 19,000 people are in receipt of disability Day Service supports at 1,041 locations around the country. These supports are provided by approximately 95 service provider agencies.

While the substantive questions regarding regulating Day Services require to be addressed by the Department of Health and the Health Information Quality Authority, there are processes in place in the absence of HIQA standards and inspection in disability day services.

The HSE has developed Interim Standards for New Directions – the day service policy.

Phase 1 implementation of these Interim Standards commenced in 2019. This phase has focused on embedding the process of continuous quality improvement by introducing self-evaluation and quality action planning. Each day service location has had an improvement plan that is continuously monitored and updated since 2020.

In 2023, the HSE will be developing a monitoring system for the Interim Standards with a view to implementation in 2024. The monitoring system will be focused on outcomes for service users and will include the involvement of service users and their families.

In the meantime, regarding the quality of the service being provided that is not being satisfactorily addressed for the service user by the service provider, any issues or concerns should be brought to the attention of HSE Disability Services in the local area.

The HSE has a Service Arrangement with each service provider that includes a commitment from the provider that services will be provided in line with national policy and the Interim Standards for New Directions.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr Brian J Higgins,
Assistant National Director:
Change Planning and Delivery – Disability and Mental Health Services**

