



**Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,**  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

**Office of the Head of Operations,**  
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22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022

Deputy Alan Farrell,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Farrell,

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 5923/22**

*To ask the Minister for Health the way that referrals from preliminary team assessments are made for children who need referral to the children's disability network team; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

#### **HSE Response**

Ninety one Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) have been established to provide supports for children aged from birth to eighteen years of age who have complex disability needs. 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. Every child with complex needs has access to a team, regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend.

Children and their families have access to the full range of services and supports of the CDNT according to their individual needs. This includes universal, targeted and specialist supports, such as individual therapeutic intervention and access to specialist consultation and assessment when needed. Supports will be provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community.

***Parents, health professionals or teachers may refer children directly to the CDNT. They do not need to go through the Assessment of Need process.***

Part 2 of the Disability Act (2005) provides for an Assessment of Need for people born on or after 1<sup>st</sup> June 2002 who are suspected of having a disability. This comprises three stages;

Stage 1 (3 months) – This is a desktop examination of the application to determine what service if any, should undertake the clinical assessment.

Stage 2 (3 months) – This is the clinical assessment stage. This is defined as a Preliminary Team Assessment that will identify initial interventions and any further assessments that may be required. This preliminary assessment will usually be undertaken by a CDNT that will also provide any intervention that is subsequently required.



Stage 3 (1 month) – Children who meet the threshold for “disability” described in the Disability Act receive a service statement that outlines the services that will be provided to meet their needs.

In most cases, the assessment officer will arrange a referral to the CDNT at the end of Stage 1 of the AON process. In the event that a child referred to an alternative service for their clinical assessment under AON is identified as requiring the services of a CDNT, this referral will be arranged by the assessing clinicians.

Yours sincerely,

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

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