



**Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,**  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
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8<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Deputy Sean Canney,  
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Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Canney,

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 9331/22**

*To ask the Minister for Health the funding that was provided to a group (details supplied) in 2021; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Details supplied; Cheshire Foundation Ireland

#### **HSE Response**

In Ireland, a wide range of disability services are provided to those with physical, sensory, intellectual disability and autism. Disability services focus on supporting and enabling people with disabilities to maximise their full potential, as independently as possible. Disability services strive to ensure the voices of service users and their families are heard, and are fully involved in planning and improving services to meet their needs. Current policies are based on the principles of person-centredness to ensure insofar as possible that the supports for a person are based on individual assessed need, will and preference and to support people to remain as close to home and connected to their community as possible.

In 2022, Disability Services has been allocated c. €2.3 billion to provide a range of services throughout the country and is spent in line with nationally agreed policy for disability services, whilst at the same time endeavouring to maximise value. Services include Residential and Respite Services, Day Services, PA and Home Support Services, and Therapeutic Supports.

Disability services are delivered through a mix of HSE direct provision as well as through non-statutory service providers, and private providers. The relationship between these providers and the HSE is governed by way of a Service Arrangement (SA) or Grant Aid Agreement (GA) via the nine Community Healthcare Organisations. The HSE currently manages 1,045 SAs or GAs with a total of 419 organisations

Operating under the name of Cheshire Ireland, the Cheshire Foundation in Ireland delivers supports and services throughout Ireland. Cheshire provides services to adults with physical disabilities and progressive neurological conditions across a number of different locations such as; in their homes, in residential centres, in supported accommodation and in stand-alone respite facilities. People accessing the services often present with very complex and high support needs which is a real increase in changing needs for people with a disability over the last 20 years. Services have also developed to meet the needs of people who present with learning disabilities and acquired brain injuries. Cheshire Ireland provides services including supported accommodation and residential respite to approximately 280 people in over 20 centres in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Wicklow, Limerick, Donegal, Kerry, Carlow, Waterford, Sligo and Mayo.



## HSE Governance Framework

The HSE has a Governance Framework to cover funding relationships with all Non Statutory Agencies. The framework was introduced to implement the legislative provisions of the Health Act, 2004 and to reflect the requirements for public accountability where the HSE is legally obliged to account for all public expenditure on health and personal social services. There is also a requirement to ensure that value for money is being achieved. It is the policy of the HSE, that all funding arrangements with non-statutory agencies are formalised by complying with this Governance Framework which has 2 different components:

- Part 1 - A Service Arrangement that is signed every 3 years by both parties and sets out the legal requirements that the agency must comply with to receive funding for the provision of services.
- Part 2 – A Set of 10 Schedules which must be completed and signed by the Agency and the HSE which sets out the detail of the service and the exact funding that the HSE is providing for the delivery of this service. This Set of Schedules also identifies the quality standards and best practice guidelines to be adhered to in the provision all services, along with process for managing complaints in relation to service provision.

The service arrangement between the HSE and a provider is an important contractual document that sets out the funding provided by the state to deliver services. The HSE is statutorily obliged to ensure that providers are accountable for the services they provide.

The HSE currently has 25 Service Arrangements with The Cheshire Foundation, covering most of the nine HSE Community Healthcare Organisation Areas. In 2021, Cheshire Ireland is scheduled to receive funding of €34,713,619 million from the HSE under Section 39 of the Health Act 2004. This is an increase from €30,498,695 in 2020 and €30,078,999 in 2019.

Cheshire Ireland has during the last two years been engaged in a review process with Disability Operations Community Services. The process is to understand the model of allocation of supports delivered by Cheshire and to move to an improved position of governance and operational service delivery.

The HSE is aware of an ever growing need to review the existing legislative and policy landscape to ensure same can aspire to and ultimately align with the key principles underpinning the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In this context, the HSE broadly welcomes the commitment in the Programme for Government to increase capacity across all aspects of care and to continue investment in healthcare infrastructure and equipment, together with the recommendations of the Capacity Review, in line with Project Ireland 2040.

The HSE has worked collaboratively with the Government in undertaking a Capacity Review of the Disability Sector to provide the framework within which services could develop over the coming decade. The Review accepts that significant investment across all health services over the coming 15-year period is required in tandem with a fundamental programme of reform.

In accordance with the HSE Corporate Plan 2021-2024, the HSE will develop and implement a multi-annual funded plan for the reform of the Disability sector in line with the UN Convention, and in collaboration with government departments and agencies and disability services stakeholders.

Yours sincerely



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