



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.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369

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

26th July 2022

Deputy David Cullinane,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 37422/22

To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 403 of 23 June 2022, the reason that it is not possible to extract information regarding the number of children with disabilities who have been referred to and assessed by staff from a company (details supplied); if records are held by the HSE regarding such referrals; the system that is used to refer children to record referrals to monitor the quality of such referrals; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 37423/22

To ask the Minister for Health the average cost of a referral of a child with a disability to a service (details supplied) to be assessed or to receive an intervention broken down by average cost of assessment or intervention and by year; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: TTM

HSE Response

TTM (Talk To Me) Healthcare Limited is part of TTM Group that also includes Resilience Limited, Just Specialist Recruitment Limited, TTM Healthcare Deutschland GMBH and TTM Healthcare Poland SP.

It is a private for profit organisation providing recruitment services and agency staff. On occasion their services are utilised to secure staff for HSE teams. TTM Group provides Community Care and Social Care to clients and service users through Resilience. Resilience provides services across Ireland with their Social Care services supporting people with disabilities in residential, shared care, outreach and day service settings.

Children with disabilities may be assessed by services such as TTM / Resilience for a range of reasons. As TTM / Resilience are contracted to provide respite and / or residential services for people with disabilities, children who are to be considered for access to their services will be assessed to determine their suitability. This data is not reported centrally.



As part of waiting list initiatives, services such as those provided by TTM, have on occasion been contracted to provide, for example cognitive assessments, speech & language therapy assessments or diagnostic ASD assessments. In addition, as TTM also provide recruitment services they may provide staff to support a range of HSE services. In circumstances where staff secured through TTM are working in HSE services, the number of service users receiving assessments / support from these staff is not recorded separately.

The HSE has Service Arrangements with Resilience Healthcare for the provision of services including Disability services and services in Primary Care. In 2022, Resilience Healthcare is being funded €22.8 million.

HSE Governance Framework

All funded services are required to deliver safe and effective services within a defined budget allocation. The HSE must ensure that it prioritises available resources on the basis of meeting the health and social needs of people with a disability.

The HSE works in partnership with agencies to ensure the best level of service possible is provided to people with a disability and their families, within the resources available.

There is continuous engagement between the HSE, the Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) and these agencies to ensure resources are prioritised on the basis of meeting the needs of people with a disability and those caring for them.

The HSE has established a Governance Framework to cover funding relationships with all Non Statutory Agencies. The framework was introduced in order to implement the legislative provisions of the Health Act, 2004 and to reflect the requirements for public accountability whereby 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. In this regard, the framework takes account of the 2005 VFM report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on disability funding. 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 of all services, along with the 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, and is underpinned by governance and quality policy frameworks. The part 2 service level agreement is completed on an annual basis between the agency and the local Community Healthcare Organisation. As part of the governance process, the HSE receives signed audited accounts from organisations on an annual basis.

Schedules are renewed annually by local Service Managers with each provider to reflect the funding for the year in question and the quantum of services to be provided for same.

As Service Providers are obliged to deliver services in line with a Service Arrangement, the HSE is required to monitor the delivery of the services on an ongoing basis. Expected performance levels must be clearly set out in the relevant Schedules. In particular, Schedule 3 - Service Delivery Specification will contain the functional details of the services to be provided under the arrangement; Schedule 4 - Performance Monitoring will contain the agreed performance management requirements and Schedule 5 – Information Requirements will provide business critical information to the Executive i.e. Annual Reports, Audited Accounts and other evaluation reports.



In order to meet these requirements, a clearly defined review process under the SA is implemented in line with the relevant Clauses and Schedules of the Arrangement. This review includes both submission of documentation and a schedule of review meetings and may entail inspections of the services by the HSE if deemed appropriate.

HSE Community Healthcare East (CHO 6) has reported outsourcing diagnostic ASD assessments required under Part 2 of the Disability Act (2005) to TTM.

Disability Services, Community Healthcare East report that clinical accountability is retained by the service provider (TTM Healthcare) to ensure that the contracted assessments have been carried out in accordance with best practice and professional standards for multidisciplinary ASD assessments. This includes the provision of appropriate professional and clinical supervision. Clinical governance is required to be delivered by a professional with a minimum of 5 years' clinical experience within the relevant client cohort. Monitoring of work provided by TTM Healthcare is ongoing and regular reviews are conducted by CHO 6. Furthermore, CHO6 has a process in place to quality assure the reports. Assessment for ASD is carried out in line with Professional Practice Guidelines for the Assessment, Formulation and Diagnosis of Autism in Children and Adolescents (2nd ed., PSI 2022).

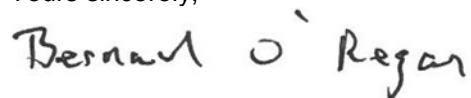
If clinically indicated, school observations and/or cognitive assessments may be undertaken at an additional cost, depending on the nature of additional assessments needed. Any school visits carried out must be in line with Department of Education and HSE COVID guidelines.

Where an Assessment of Need is requested under the Disability Act 2005, TTM Healthcare will take cognisance of the HIQA standards for Assessment of Need.

The above procedures would also apply if undertaken by staff employed by the HSE.

CHO 6 report that the total cost of an ASD Assessment is approximately €2,250 excluding VAT per assessment based on 2 clinicians completing the assessment. However, the cost may vary depending on the particular needs of each child.

Yours sincerely,



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