



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>

5th August 2022

Deputy Holly Cairns,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Cairns,

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 41797/22

To ask the Minister for Health the number of therapists that are assigned to work directly with children and young people in schools in each CHO including a list of the relevant schools.

PQ 41799/22

To ask the Minister for Health the details of each children's disability network team in relation to whether they are run by the HSE or by a third-party organisation, the name of the organisation in each relevant case in tabular form.

PQ 41800/22

To ask the Minister for Health the children's disability network teams which currently provide specialist supports; the type of exceptional needs' that they provide supports for; and the number of staff, the speciality and seniority of each who provide these supports in tabular form.

HSE Response

In 2021, the remainder of ninety-one multidisciplinary CDNTs were established to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area.

Regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend, every child with complex needs and their families have access to the full range of family centred services and supports of their 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 are provided as is feasible in the child's natural environments - their home, school and community. The CDNTs do not collect data on the number of supports provided in each setting.



Since 2019, more than 475 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area.

A Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) Staff Census and Workforce Review was undertaken in October 2021 and a final report has been issued to the Department of Health and relevant stakeholders. This report has provided valuable information on the number of staff working in the CDNTs by discipline and grade and staff vacancies at a point in time. Vacancies continue to be tracked monthly.

Please see copy of the attached report for your information. This gives the information that you are requesting regarding the managing or Lead Agency for each CDNT as well as the grades/disciplines/role of the staff.

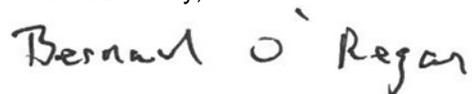
All CDNTs will provide supports for children with complex needs regardless of their diagnosis, where they live or where they go to school. School based supports will be provided where appropriate.

It is estimated that there are approximately 50,000 children with complex disability needs in the Republic of Ireland. A small proportion of these children attend special schools. 85 posts approved in mid-2021 were allocated to support services in thirty three special schools that had on-site therapy services prior to the establishment of CDNTs in 2021. Less than 2,500 children were enrolled in these special schools. The staff recruited to these posts report to the Children's Disability Network Manager and are part of the local CDNT. The posts include occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists, social workers and speech & language therapists. Children attending the thirty three special schools in question receive their services in the school or in other settings as appropriate. While on-site services are provided in the schools as appropriate, CDNT staff are not based in these special schools.

The HSE is continuing to engage with the Minister for Health, Minister of State for Disability, An Taoiseach and relevant Government Departments regarding the provision of on-site multidisciplinary supports in a number of special schools. This includes a group of special schools that previously had on-site multidisciplinary supports as well as six special schools established in 2021 and 2022.

The HSE has committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure that children attending these special schools can access appropriate supports as quickly as possible.

Yours Sincerely,



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