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Deputy David Cullinane,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
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Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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 29904/22

To ask the Minister for Health the estimated revenue and capital cost to move 100 persons out of congregated settings.

HSE Response

In June 2011 the Report “Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A Strategy for Community Inclusion” was published, which identified that in 2008 approximately 4,000 individuals with disabilities lived in congregated type settings, defined as where ten or more people reside in a single living unit or are campus based. It found that notwithstanding the commitment and initiative of dedicated staff and management, that there were a significant number of people still experiencing institutional living conditions where they lacked basic privacy and dignity, and lived their lives apart from any community and family.

The report initially recommended a seven year timeframe for the implementation of the policy and the 2016 Programme for Government identified that there should be a one- third reduction in the number of individuals residing on congregated settings by the year 2021, which reflects the continued commitment of the Government to the policy of decongregation, whilst acknowledging that the process of supporting each person to transition from a congregated setting to a community based service in a sustainable and safe way, requires planning and time.

Status of congregated Settings

Time to Move On from Congregated Settings is progressing and continues to demonstrate very positive results for service users who have transitioned to living in homes in community settings. Overall, the population in congregated settings is 50% lower than those identified in the original report; 16 Centres have been fully de-congregated and now there are around 1,800 people remaining in congregated settings.

A suite of Reports relating to the implementation of the Time to Move on policy that provides statistical information on the progress made and the people that have transitioned as well as the population remaining in congregated settings, is available on the following weblink:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/congregatedsettings/reports-and-publications/>



Pointedly, the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the stark reality of the risk to health that living in a congregated setting can present for the residents. The vast majority of people with disabilities living in the residential services now live in small group homes with no more than nine others.

Costs

With regard to the question asked, there is both a revenue and capital cost associated with implementing the Time to Move On policy.

Revenue Funding

The additional revenue funding required for each person moving to the community from a congregated setting is currently estimated to be in the region of at least €70,000 per person. This cost is estimated based at the highest cost band based on current day service profiling tool, to recognise that each person needs to be appropriately supported with a meaningful day service in line with current policy (New Directions) once they leave the congregated residential setting.

The cost to support 100 people to move would be approximately €7,000,000 (taking an average cost of €70,000 per person)

Capital Funding:

Delivering appropriate housing for the people transitioning from the congregated settings is achieved through a number of different options depending on support and housing needs. This may be:

- Social Housing Options (under the DHPLG/Housing Authorities), either revenue or capital funded
- HSE Capital funded housing projects

Based on the cost of the housing projects delivered to date under the HSE Capital funding stream, it is estimated that a capital cost in the region of €160,000 per person is required to support the transition to community. There is no provision in this figure for the increase in the cost of building materials currently being experienced across the construction sector, which is identified as a 20% price rise.

The average cost per person is the benchmark currently being used as this will accommodate a range of options/solutions some of which are less expensive or can be met through revenue funding options (i.e. rental arrangement with HAP payment) and others that are significantly higher cost i.e. for people requiring more specialised housing.

Source

This additional cost per placement is a balance that takes into account all the data sources and cost indicators noted below. It must be noted that there is a wide variation on the support needs of people accessing services that influence the range of costs quoted below.

- Time to Move on Report average cost in 2012 : €106,000 per person
- Restated cost of placement in 2019 (revision of original 2012 cost) : €115,000 per person
- Draft report on current cost per placement in community setting 2019: €189,000 per person
- Current cost for each additional new emergency placement 2020 : €290,000 per person
- Current cost of each additional enhanced placement 2020: €78,000 per person
- Capacity review estimate of cost per placement 2018 ; €140,200 per person

Caveats

- The costs per person provided are an average. There are significantly large variations depending on the support needs of the individuals and the capacity of the service providers to reconfigure and release resources.
- The true cost of decongregation for the people with the most significant support needs is still being explored as in many cases these are the cohort of residents that remain in the congregated settings due to the



requirement for significant specialist supports and accommodation. On this basis the cost required per person to achieve full decongregation is expected to increase over time as the number of people remaining decreases, the complexity of support needs for those people is greater and services will have exhausted all options for reconfiguration.

- This response does not reference the number of people remaining in the congregated settings, as this varies depending on the data source.

In addition to this, there are also a significant number of under 65 year old people with disabilities living in nursing homes for older people, as noted in the Ombudsman Report “Wasted Lives” which do not feature in the Time To Move statistics .

In addition, the HSE welcomes the recent publication of the Department of Health’s “*Disability Capacity Review to 2032 -A Review of Disability Social Care Demand and Capacity Requirements up to 2032*”. The Capacity Review provides detailed evidence of the extent of demographic and unmet need and provides detailed estimates of service and expenditure requirements for:


- residential care
- adult day services
- personal assistance and home support
- multidisciplinary therapies
- respite, and other community services and supports.

The Capacity Review emphasises the importance of a planned approach to meeting current and future requirements and the critical need for a multi-annual current and capital funding programme to secure effective and timely delivery, at the most reasonable cost. The HSE strongly welcomes this recommendation and agrees that detailed forward planning underpinned by multi-annual investment is required to ensure that services become available where and when they are needed.

Service Plan 2022

As per the 2022 Service plan, the HSE aims to provide 143 people with a disability living in congregated settings with more person-centred homes in the community. A budget of €5 million in funding has been allocated toward this.

Yours sincerely



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