



29th November 2022

Mr. Mattie McGrath TD
Dail Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ 56802/22

To ask the Minister for Health the full list of respite services that are available to children with disabilities in South Tipperary; if they are operational on a full-time or part-time basis; the number of children who are in receipt of these respite services; the timeframe between a respite session; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy McGrath,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

I have reviewed the matter and the following is the current position.

South East Community Healthcare (SECH) delivers a wide range of Disability Services including respite to children residing in the South East. As part of this service provision, SECH are committed to ensuring an equitable and fair approach to service delivery in line with budget allocation.

Respite may occur in a variety of settings for any length of time. It is not always centre-based and may be provided in a number of ways, including day respite such as: Saturday Clubs, School Holiday Camps and overnight respite. This is dependent on client need and services available within current resources.

There are two children's respite service providers with Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the HSE in South Tipperary. These Providers do not currently have capacity to deliver full-time respite services due to availability of staff.

The HSE is willing to provide additional funding to increase service capacity, however, as with other areas, there are recruitment challenges and staff shortages. In the interim both services are flexible in responding within their available capacity. Waiting lists are in operation for both respite providers.

Overnight respite remains at capacity and each year a very limited number of places become available. Overnight respite is prioritised for children with multiple complexities who cannot access alternative forms of respite or where there are additional vulnerabilities.

If and when overnight respite becomes available, a number of factors are taken into consideration which impact on the allocation of nights. These include compatibility of the children



to be placed in respite together; current number of requests for overnights and need prioritisation. Whilst chronology is considered there are multiple aspects of respite assessment.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Anne Ennis
Head of Service, Disability Service
South East Community Healthcare