



**Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,**  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

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28<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Deputy Mary Lou McDonald,  
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Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy McDonald,

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: 51284/22**

*“To ask the Minister for Health the number of people moved out of congregated settings each month to date in 2022, in tabular form; the cost of this measure; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”*

**PQ: 51285/22**

*“To ask the Minister for Health the number of people who moved out of congregated settings in 2023, in tabular form; the cost of this measure; and if he will make a statement on the matter”*

**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. The original 2012 report identified over 4,000 people living in 72 congregated settings. With the incremental progress made since 2012 to support people to transition to homes in the community, 16 Centres have been fully de-



congregated and there are now less than 1,600 people remaining in the tracked congregated settings identified in the original report. This represents less than half of the number identified in the original report.

**In summary:**

- A total of 945 people had completed their transition to the community by 01/01/2020
- 6 centres have closed completely and now support residents entirely in the community
- There are 19 centres that now have less than 10 people remaining in the setting/campus.
- There are 1,494 residents (76%) now living in units with no more than nine other people and of this 343 residents (18%) are living in units with no more than three others.
- There are only 13 campus' with more than 50 residents remaining compared to 24 settings in 2012.
- In 2012 the largest campus was home to 227 residents and the largest residential building was home to 112 people. Currently, the largest campus has 145 residents and the largest residential building has 28 residents.

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.

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/>

The target for de-congregation for 2020 was set at 132, and 126 people had transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community by year end.

In 2021, a total of 135 people transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community, against a target of 144 for the year.

In 2022, 29 people have transitioned from congregated settings to homes in the Community to date against a target of 143 for the year. This is below target due to the ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades and operating in a competitive housing market.

Work remains on-going to address the key challenges arising in relation to the procurement of appropriate housing in a buoyant housing market, and the undertaking of necessary works to ensure HIQA compliance – which must be secured before any new facility can become operational. CHOs are endeavouring to meet targets by the end of the year.

In relation to expected 2023 activity, the HSE welcomes the Letter of Determination from the Minister for Health and is currently engaged in the process of developing the 2023 National Service Plan in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions and funding allocation.

Yours Sincerely,



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

