



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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26th April 2023

Deputy Alan Dillon,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: alan.dillon@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Dillon

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: 17326/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if he will provide additional funding to the MS care centre to provide an additional 1.128 bed-nights per year for people with multiple sclerosis in Ireland, to allow residents to learn more about their MS and find ways to self-manage their condition; and if he will make a statement on the matter

HSE Response

HSE Disability Services is allocated funding on an annual basis to provide a range of services throughout the country. Funding is spent in line with nationally agreed policy for disability services, whilst at the same time endeavouring to maximise value. Services include Residential and Respite Services, Day Services, PA and Home Support Services, and Therapeutic Supports.

Disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the person's individual requirements and care needs. The role of the HSE is to provide a multi-disciplinary team approach which includes the provision of health and personal supports required by people with multiple sclerosis and incorporates hospital, primary care and community services.

The range of community services and supports provided to people with a disability including multiple sclerosis include for example assisted living services (PA and Home Support), Therapy Services, Aids and appliances and Respite Services.

The HSE works in partnership with organisations including Section 38, Section 39, Out of State and For Profit organisations to ensure the best level of service possible is provided to people with a disability, and their families, within the available resources. The majority of specialised disability provision (80%) is delivered through non-statutory sector service providers.



The HSE acknowledges the role and contribution of non-statutory agencies in the development and provision of health and personal social services and is committed to the development of effective working relationships as enacted by the Health Act 2004.

The HSE has over 1,045 Service Arrangements or Grant Aid Agreements with approximately 419 organisations providing a wide variety of disability services on behalf of the HSE. These Service Arrangements and Grant Aid Agreements are covered by a Governance Framework.

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 within the allocated resources.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland (MS Ireland)

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland (MS Ireland) MS Ireland provides a range of services and resources to the whole MS Community; those with MS, family members, employers and Health professionals.

Through its Regional Community Workers, MS Ireland organises a range of Living with MS programmes, workshops and activities throughout the country that are targeted at various groups such as those newly diagnosed, carers, children of parents with MS and health professionals. Programmes include physical therapies, symptom management and information/ education seminars.

MS Ireland provides services at a local and national level. Locally their team of regional workers provide one-to-one and group support and their 39 voluntary branches provide opportunities to socialise, share experiences and avail of services.

MS Ireland also operates a confidential helpline that provides immediate information and support to those affected by MS. MS Ireland receives funding from the HSE under section 39 of the Health Act 2004. This funding is governed by a number of Service Arrangements in 7 of the 9 CHO Areas, which identify service delivery provided by the agency in return for the money being provided to them. The Service Arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis.

MS Ireland has received the following funding through HSE Disability Services:

2020: € 2,583,051

2021: € 2,631,822

2022: € 2,680,823

(Please note:-The funding Information contained is from the SPG system is as at the date indicated, and represents the funding arrangement allocations entered by the operational system. SPG is not a finance or payment system and figures will fluctuate on a continuum as updates on governance arrangement are uploaded.)

Community Healthcare Area 7 (CHO 7) contributes the largest amount of funding at over 62% of the total allocated to MS Ireland. Additional funding requests for further investment in the MS Care Centre, Rathgar should be made in the first instance to the local Community Healthcare Area.

The HSE recognises the value of MS Ireland and the MS Care Centre's support and services to people with Multiple Sclerosis. However, further increases in funding can only be considered within the parameters and scope of funding available to the HSE.

Estimates Process and Multi Annual Investment

The Health Act 2004 Section 31 (1) and (2) states that within 21 days after the publication by Government of the Estimates for supply services for the financial year or such other period as the Minister may allow, the Executive shall: a) Prepare in accordance with this section, a service plan for



the financial year or any other period as may be determined by the Minister, and b) Adopt the plan so prepared and submit it to the Minister for approval.

Each year, prior to the publication of the Service Plan and the allocation of funding commensurate with that plan, based on government direction and the economic environment, the HSE establishes a process and accountability route to identify financial and human resource requirements for the following year for the totality of the organisation.

This typically includes:

Existing Levels of Service, Service Priorities, Government Policy, Strategic Direction of HSE and service efficiencies / initiatives.

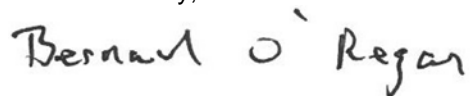
Each year the HSE participates in the Estimates Process with the Department of Health and makes a submission for additional monies to meet the health and social care needs of the population it services.

The Disability Service makes submissions for additional funding for Day, Residential, Respite, Home Support/PA hours, Multi Disciplinary Posts and Neuro Rehab monies as a key element of its submission. Any new funding secured is allocated to the CHOs to provide services to those with the greatest need (priority basis).

The HSE makes every effort to secure multi-annual investment for services via the Estimates process and is very conscious of the need to deliver disability policy on a more sustainable footing given the significant levels of need for increased and more effective services and supports to enable people with a disability to live independent lives in their own community.

The 2023 HSE Service Plan has been published and sets out, at a high level, the anticipated service activity levels that are to be delivered during 2023 commensurate with the level of funding allocated to Disability Services.

Yours sincerely,



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

