



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.

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21st April 2023

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 question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 17504/22

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to outline the staffing to caseload ratios used to calculate the numbers, types, and scale of therapists and clinicians required for each CDNT; how regularly these ratios are reviewed; and what processes are in place to reconfigure services according to local needs.

HSE Response

91 Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) are aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

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.

Work is ongoing on mapping specialised services and supports, and paediatric supports available and gap analysis for children with highly complex needs, in order to develop standardised approaches to integrated pathways of support for CDNTs and Primary Care staff.

CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work, dietetics and others. The team works closely together in a family centred model, focusing on the child's and family's own priorities.

Children's Disability Network Teams were established based on a reconfiguration of the existing resources that were available in each area. The allocation of staff to each team was based on a number

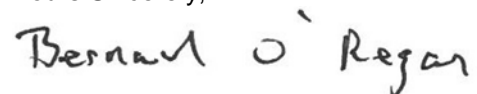


of factors including the population size and the available skill mix. When development posts are assigned to children's disability services they are allocated to each Community Healthcare Organisation based on the population of children in each area and the approved staffing levels for CDNTs in the area.

Each CHO Governance Group then agrees how new posts will be assigned to teams as well as the grades and disciplines of staff to be recruited, in order to optimise the equity of resources i.e. discipline and competencies, across all teams. It is anticipated that the CDNT Model of Service Review to commence in 2023 will include a review of the staffing levels to child population across all teams.

As part of the HSE's workforce planning process, the ESRI has been commissioned to undertake a Workforce Demands Project to 2035 for Community Services. The work of the ESRI will inform the work of the HSE in assigning resources to areas of most need.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard O'Regan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

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

