



**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.

T: 00353 (0) 61 483369  
Suíomh Gréasáin/Website: <http://www.hse.ie>

17<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [fergus.odowd@oireachtas.ie](mailto:fergus.odowd@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

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: 33827/23**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if he will respond to calls from an organisation (details supplied) to provide sustainable funding in Budget 2024 for national physiotherapy services for people with multiple sclerosis, and other neurological conditions totalling €880,000 per annum across all nine CHOs, and an increase of €627,000 in annual investment in the National MS Respite Centre; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Details supplied: MS Ireland

**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

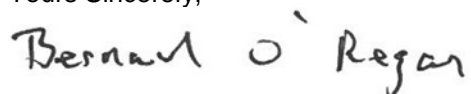
(Please note:-The funding Information contained is from the SPG system is as at the date indicated, and represents the funding arrangement allocations entered by the operational system. SPG is not a finance or payment system and figures will fluctuate on a continuum as updates on governance arrangement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

In addition, information pertaining to 2023 is not be fully uploaded on the SPG system as yet)

Community Healthcare Area 7 (CHO 7) contributes the largest amount of funding at over 62% of the total allocated to MS Ireland. This includes the funding that is provided to the MS Care Centre. 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.

Yours Sincerely,



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

