



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

Office of the Head of Operations,
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4th August 2023

Deputy Sean Sherlock,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sean.sherlock@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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: 36856/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the estimated cost of hiring the required therapists to fully clear waiting list numbers in each CDNT, the cost of those therapists, in tabular form.

Staffing

Since 2019, more than 610 development posts have been allocated to children's disability services across the country. These posts have been assigned to teams based on a number of factors, including the existing ratio of staff to the number of children with disabilities in each area. This figure includes 190 posts provided in 2022 as well as an additional 136.3 WTEs to restore pre-existing services in 104 special schools.

On 12th October 2022, the HSE undertook a census and workforce review of all staff working in the CDNTs and a review of all vacant posts.

The total number of approved WTE for the CDNTs is 2,102.62 wte. Based on the CDNT Staffing Census (Oct 2022), there are 707.32 vacant whole time equivalent posts across the 91 CDNTs.

The 2022 Census Report outlines the variations of therapists and the vacancies across the CDNTs. These posts are fully funded. Whilst a robust Retention and Recruitment Campaign is now in train for CDNTs, time related savings from these new posts in the interim is being used across the CHOs in a number of ways to improve children's disability services, including resourcing AONs and ASD assessments privately to reduce the waiting times and commissioning alternative appropriate services and supports to support children and their families awaiting a CDNT service.

A list of Approved Service Providers will be established in September through an Expressions of Interest process for CDNTs to access as appropriate based on the needs of waitlisted children.



Disability Capacity Review

The table below is taken from the Disability Capacity Review report and gives an indication of new staffing needed in addition to current posts. However, it must be noted that that this is grossly underestimated as referring to 45,000 children requiring CDNT service, not the 72,000 estimated to require it.

Table 32: Staffing of children's therapy teams 2018 (WTEs), and estimates of future staffing needed

	Current (Jan 2018)	2019	2022	2027	2032
Occupational therapist	299	491	494	476	440
Speech & Language therapist	326	474	477	460	425
Psychologist	205	377	380	367	338
Physiotherapist	213	305	306	295	273
Social Worker	130	196	197	190	176
Total	1,172	1,843	1,853	1,788	1,651
Unallocated by specialty	9				
+ 100 new posts from 2019	1,281				

The estimates are based on those who require an enhanced service needing on average 50% more service

Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 - 2026

Further to discussions between Roderic O’Gorman, TD, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Anne Rabbitte, TD, Minister of State for Disabilities and Paul Reid, the then CEO of the Health Service Executive (HSE), it was agreed that an overarching roadmap would be developed to improve services for children with disabilities and their families.

The PDS Roadmap, which contains 60 actions for the Health Service Executive (HSE) and its funded service providers, does as follows:

- Clarifies the commitment of the HSE, supported by Government, to providing high quality, responsive supports and services for children with disabilities;
- Provides an accountability and reporting framework for the implementation and delivery of supports and services.

The document has been developed by the HSE in consultation with HSE funded Lead Agencies of CDNTs, Department of Health (formally), and the Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and agreed by Minister Roderic O’Gorman and Minister of State for Disabilities, Anne Rabbitte.

The Roadmap will address improvements in the following key areas:

1. Integrated Services between Disabilities, Primary Care, CAMHS and Tusla
2. CDNT Service Access and Development, including the statutory Assessments of Need
3. Workforce
4. Communication and Engagement
5. Engagement with colleagues in Education and Support for Special schools

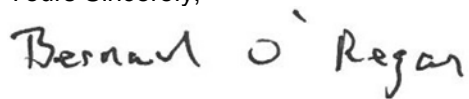


Under Workforce, the Roadmap includes a number of critical retention and recruitment actions including:

- Recruitment of 462 of the above 700 unfilled posts by the end of 2023 and the balance of 240 posts in 2025.
- 300 Therapy Assistant posts over 2023 (50 posts), 2024 (125 posts) and 2025 (125 posts)
- 360 new whole time equivalent (WTE) Health and Social Care Professional posts for CDNTs in 2025-2026
- 78 WTE posts in Primary Care CHNs to support children with disabilities and non complex needs more appropriately.
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The Roadmap was approved by the HSE Board on July 28th and will be launched shortly by DCEDIY.

Yours Sincerely,



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

