



Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta,
Caipéal agus Eastáit

Ospidéal Sir Patrick Dun,
Sráid na Canálach Móire Íochtarach.
Baile Átha Cliath 2, D02 P667

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Mr Mark Ward, TD
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

25th September 2023

PQ 39138/23* To ask the Minister for Health the number of primary care centres that are neurodivergent-friendly; the policies in place to ensure that they are; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Mark Ward

Dear Deputy Ward,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

There are no particular standards relating to neurodivergent-friendly environments but the HSE has embedded inclusivity in the processes for procuring buildings and providing neurodiversity- friendly environments. All buildings including Primary Care Centres, whether designed and constructed by the HSE or by other parties on behalf of the HSE, are based on Universal Design principles and are neurodivergent-friendly.

Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so it can be accessed, understood and used by the greatest extent by all people regardless of age, size, ability or disability. The UD approach caters for a broad range of people with diverse abilities within the neurodiversity spectrum. The intention is to facilitate the broadest range of users without the need for specialist adaption or modification to suit the particular requirements of one cohort.

In the provision of accommodation, the HSE ensures compliance with:

1. The Building Regulations (which apply to all buildings including new buildings and refurbishments/retrofits)
2. 'Buildings for Everyone', other advice from the National Disability Authority and also the National Disability Strategy 2017-21
3. UD principles as championed by the Centre in Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD).

All of these allow buildings to be inclusive and also neurodivergent-friendly.



The HSE National HR Capability and Culture group are in the process of preparing *A Guideline on Reasonable Accommodation* to facilitate staff in HSE buildings and this would include those who are neurodivergent.

HSE buildings are designed to be inclusive so that they can be used efficiently and comfortably by a broad range of users including those who are neurodivergent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul de Freine', written over a horizontal line.

Paul de Freine
National Director
Capital & Estates