



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>

9th October 2023

Deputy Michael Lowry,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: michael.lowry@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Lowry,

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: 41354/23

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the amount of funding that has been spent by children's disability network teams on outsourcing to private providers in order to maintain a level of service provision in 2022 and to date in 2023; if this data can be provided for every CHO and for each year, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

Approximately €11.5m has been allocated to address waiting lists for clinical assessments identified through the Assessment of Need process. This funding is being utilised to procure diagnostic ASD assessments from the private sector.

In addition, the HSE at local level is using Time Related Savings to source AON assessments privately for children in the order as registered on the AOS (AON information management system).

In May 2023, the National Director of Community Operations issued a memo advising Chief Officers to use unspent CDNT funding to commission ancillary supports to complement children's disability services whilst we continue working to recruit into the vacant posts. These include additional respite, complementary therapies where appropriate clinical and governance assurances are in place, and capacity building initiatives for children and their families.

Progressing the outsourcing of these assessments is challenging however, in this regard, Disability Services nationally is working with HSE Procurement to develop a tender process and Service Specification for the delivery of Assessment of Need from private providers. A successful procurement process will facilitate the CDNTs to focus on the provision of intervention for children on their caseloads.

In line with appropriate procurement procedures, Garda vetting and due diligence practice, private providers are currently being contracted by the HSE to provide assessments and / or interventions. In



such instances, the HSE ensures that the contracted providers are appropriately qualified and that any assessments or interventions are provided in line with the appropriate standards.

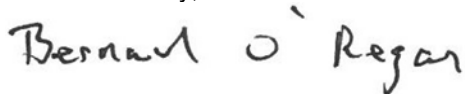
The €11.5m in funding is held nationally. While CHOs locally have private assessment expenditure, the CHOs have not as yet fully submitted claims against this funding. In June 2023, the CHOs had indicated that there is approximately €7.7million in expenditure at various stages of payment. Some of this is being costed against the €11.5m and as mentioned above, Time Related Savings is also being utilised for the procurement/payment for private assessment.

Time Related Savings references where there is a budget / funding in place for a Community Healthcare Area (CHO) or National office and this funding is unused in a period primarily due to inability to recruit / vacant posts/ uncommenced services.

At a local level, the Chief Officers and Chief Financial Officers in each CHO normally decide how they use unspent monies.

It is important to note that children do not require an Assessment of Need as defined by the Disability Act (2005) in order to access a CDNT or Primary Care service. They can be referred by a healthcare professional or parent/carer to the CDNT for children with complex needs as a result of their disability, or to Primary Care for children with non-complex needs.

Yours Sincerely,



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

