



**Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,**  
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,  
An Chéad Uirlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,  
Áras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,  
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,  
Caladh an Treoigh,  
Luimneach.

**Office of the Assistant National Director,**  
National Disability Team,  
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,  
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,  
National Technology Park,  
Castletroy,  
Limerick.

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

Deputy Holly Cairns,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie](mailto: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: 32203/24**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the details of the number of disabled persons who are in receipt of intensive support packages currently; the number of people who are currently on assessment or waiting lists for these packages; the number of people he plans to provide packages for next year; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

## **HSE Response**

### **Intensive Support Packages**

This was a new development initiative put in place in 2020 and then further developed in 2021. The rationale behind the initiative was to demonstrate a person-centred approach to targeted supports designed to maintain the person in their own home and community, reducing a risk of future residential needs.

These intensive transitional support packages, as referred to in NSP 2020, were mainly aimed at children and young people with complex/high support needs experiencing substantial levels of need, but who do not, as yet, require a high cost long term residential placement. The intention being to prevent family breakdown and demand for emergency residential placements by providing access to pre-crisis interventions such as:

- Intensive in-home visiting supports;
- Planned residential respite interventions;
- Specialist behavioural support interventions;
- Access to planned extended day / weekend and summer day based activities.



In 2020, Disability Services committed to provide 144 intensive transitional support packages. However, at end of December 2020, a total of 857 intensive home support packages were developed across the 9 CHOs.

In 2021, €6m in funding was allocated to Intensive Support packages. Disability Services committed to developing 358 additional intensive support packages and by year end had put in place 497 intensive support packages. This included 437 new packages and 60 packages approved in 2020 against additional Q4 funding, which were maintained in 2021.

The significant increase on the NSP targets was thought to be indicative of the requirement for additional in-home services to compensate for the reduction in the delivery of traditional respite services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the HSE acknowledges that the delivery of these Intensive Support Packages exceeded the targets agreed as part of the service planning process in both 2020 and 2021. It is also acknowledged that a number of packages recorded in the 857 referenced above may have been focused purely on hours of support and did not contain the more holistic elements around behaviour support and family-centred planning. Again, the impact of the pandemic and the need to enhance core levels of service during closures of and service reductions in day services and respite played a significant role here.

In accordance with the NSP 2022, the HSE was allocated funding to provide 422 in home respite supports for emergency cases; this included 402 packages put in place in 2021, which have been maintained in 2022, plus 10 new supported living packages and 10 new intensive support packages to support transitions and discharges from acute services and the National Rehabilitation Hospital. At end of December 2022, 18 new intensive support packages and 19 new supported living packages were developed. As per the 2022 National Service Plan, funding for this was provided under all new measures – Disability Services.

In accordance with NSP 2023, Disability Services committed to the provision of 447 in home respite supports for emergency cases; this includes 420 packages put in place in 2022 which have been maintained in 2023, plus 27 additional in-home respite packages to children and young adults outlined in NSP 2023.

In 2023, we also developed a further 45 in home respite supports for Priority 1 cases, which added to the packages put in place in 2022 and were maintained in 2023, brings the number of in home respite supports for Priority 1 emergency cases delivered during the year to 465.

In accordance with NSP 2024, Specialist Disability Services is committed to providing 469 intensive support packages for priority 1 cases. This includes packages put in place in 2023 which have been maintained in 2024.

Please also note that these intensive support packages would be provided in addition to the traditional services that we deliver, such as Day Services; Respite Services; Personal Assistance and Home Support Services.

The need for increased services is acknowledged and the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

### **Waiting Lists**

There is no centrally maintained waiting list for the provision of Intensive Support packages. The local HSE CHO areas would be aware of the need and requirements in their respective areas and would work with the local Service Providers with a view to responding to the level of presenting needs within the resources available.

### **Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSMAT)**

HSE Disability Services has introduced a system called the Disability Support Application Management Tool (DSMAT), which provides a list and detailed profiles of people (Adults & Children) who need additional funded supports in each CHO.

DSMAT captures detailed information on home and family circumstances and a detailed presentation profile of the individuals. This enables Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) areas to record and manage requests for support and to ensure that the application process is equitable and transparent.



It is important to note that in the absence of a statutory, legislative framework providing entitlement to services, the DSMAT is not a chronological waiting list. Rather, it is a support to the CHO area to feed into its decision making process around prioritisation of services, subject to budgetary constraints.

This means that services are allocated on the basis of greatest presenting need and associated risk factors.

### **Future Planning**

With regard to the number of people the HSE plans to provide packages for next year, this will be outlined in due course in the National Service Plan 2025.

Prior to the publication of the service Plan, each year the HSE participates in the Estimates Process with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and makes a submission for additional monies to meet the health and social care needs of the population it services.

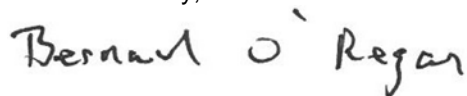
The Disability Service makes submissions for additional funding for Day, Residential, Respite, Home Support/PA hours, Intensive Support packages, Multi Disciplinary Posts and Neuro Rehab monies as a key element of its submission. Any new funding secured is allocated to the CHOs to provide services to those with the greatest need (priority basis).

The HSE makes every effort to secure multi-annual investment for services via the Estimates process and is very conscious of the need to deliver disability policy on a more sustainable footing given the significant levels of need for increased and more effective services and supports to enable people with a disability to live independent lives in their own community

The Action Plan for Disability Services 2024 – 2026 advises that around 550 additional intensive support packages is required to be put in place over 2024-2026, to limit need for high-cost residential care places.

Each CHO continues to actively manage applications for support from service users with high levels of acuity/safeguarding risks, through active case-management and inter-agency cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,



**Bernard O'Regan**  
**Assistant National Director**  
**National Disability Team**

