



**Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,**  
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,  
An Chéad Urlár - 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> March 2025

Deputy Eoghan Kenny,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [eoghan.kenny@oireachtas.ie](mailto:eoghan.kenny@oireachtas.ie)

Dear Deputy Kenny,

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: 16607/25**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth following the Disability Capacity Review published in 2021, to outline the number of additional residential places that have been opened since; the number of which have been allocated; and if she will make a statement on the matter.*

**HSE Response**

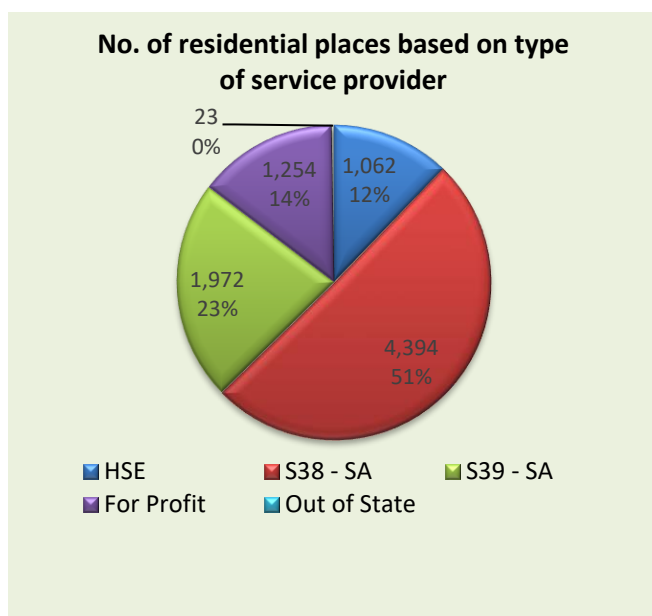
**Residential Services**

Residential services make up the largest part of the Disability funding disbursed by the HSE – over 60% of the total budget – and approximately 90 service providers provide residential services to 8,705 individuals throughout the country. The bulk of these are provided by the 50 highest funded agencies (comprising both Section 38 & Section 39 organisations) – some 6,366 places, or 74%. The HSE itself provides 1,062 or 12% of the places. While 1,254 places or 14% are provided by Private-for-Profit agencies.

The HSE developed a Residential Capacity Database to capture the number of residential placements / contract capacity per the service arrangement between the six RHA areas and the service provider agencies.

Please see the Pie Chart on the next page which depicts the number of residential places based on type of service provider.





The HSE acknowledges that demographic challenges associated with the increase in the number of people living with a disability, the increase in age and life expectancy and the changing needs of people with a disability have all led to the need for increased residential facilities. In this regard, the HSE continues to work with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and partner service provider agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

The table below provides information on the number of residential places at the end of each year since 2021 and indicates that residential capacity has increased by 559 places in the last 4 years.

Table 1:

Year	End 2021	End 2022	End 2023	End 2024	End of March 2025
Residential places	8,146	8,283	8,400	8,660	8,705

A number of new emergency residential places have been added to the residential base, which results in a capacity increase. However, it should also be noted that Residential Capacity will also reduce during the year as a result of the loss of places in congregated settings due to deaths, which cannot be re-utilised. This is in keeping with Government policy, which is to move away from institutionalised settings (i.e. Time to Move On from Congregate Settings) where the State is actively implementing a policy that will have a bed reduction impact. In addition, “in-year” capacity (bed) levels will also be impacted negatively as a result of regulatory requirements; that is, where an inspection outcome leads to capacity being reduced.

### Future Planning- Residential places

The demand for full-time residential placements within designated centres is extremely high and is reflective of the absence of multi-year development funding that has not been in place since 2007/2008.

The Department of Health’s 2021 Disability Capacity Review has projected a need for a minimum of an additional 1,900 residential places by 2032 under a minimum projection and an extra 3,900 in order to return to levels of provision prior to the beginning of the 2008 recession.

## Action Plan for Disability Services 2023-2026

The Action Plan for Disability Services 2024-2026, sets out a three year programme designed to tackle the deficits highlighted in the *Disability Capacity Review to 2032*, which identified the demand for specialist community-based disability services arising from demographic change, and considerable levels of unmet need.

The National Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 places responsibility for the provision of housing with the Department of Housing and it is the responsibility of the HSE to provide additional supports related to care needs. The HSE and Local Authorities are required to work together to map the need and to develop plans for delivering housing to people with disabilities.

Work remains on-going to address the key challenges arising in relation to the procurement of appropriate housing in a buoyant housing market, the ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades, and the undertaking of necessary works to ensure HIQA compliance – which must be secured before any new facility can become operational.

The policy landscape and regulatory requirement over the last ten years brought welcome improvement but constrained our residential capacity within available budget. The HSE has incurred a financial deficit each year recently to meet the essential response to emergencies across the country. The challenge has led to predominantly high cost out-of-area placements away from people families, communities and natural supports. To address this situation the HSE has recently initiated a multi-faceted programme of work to begin to address the associated issues. These include;

- Engaging with the section 38 and 39 sector through the umbrellas bodies to reopen provision that had closed off in recent years. This includes demonstration projects and sharing examples of good and more sustainable practice, addressing Organisational Development and Transformation requirement and upscaling development quickly and effectively.
- Engagement with the Department of Housing, the Housing Agency, Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies to provide a stream of living options – housing adaptations own home to remain at home including autism, standard disability housing as per the Capacity Report - specialist housing requirement for specific cohorts.
- Review policy, eg decongregation (HSE) for age-appropriate response, tailored ASD for appropriate local supports, specialist advance dementia care.
- Deliver an output from National Placement Oversight and Review of high-cost placements, renegotiation where possible and practical and repatriation where appropriate.
- A procurement process Residential Placements framework.
- Delivery of enhanced data in relation to residential services.

Yours Sincerely,

**Bernard O'Regan**  
**Assistant National Director,**  
**Access and Integration,**  
**National Disability Services**

