



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  
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Castletroy, Limerick.

6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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**PQ: 20748/25**

*To ask the Minister for Health her plans to develop a clear clinical pathway and specialist multidisciplinary functional neurological disorder service, including measures to ensure timely and accurate diagnosis as well as appropriate ongoing support; and if she will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Mac Lochlainn,

Thank you for your Parliamentary Question referenced above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply.

Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) is a condition which arises primarily from a disorder of nervous system functioning, rather than identifiable pathophysiological disease. Alterations in the functioning of key brain networks, rather than abnormalities in brain structure, underpin FND symptoms. The frequency and severity of FND symptoms can fluctuate and it is now believed that there is no one single causative mechanism for FND.

FND symptoms may follow a chronic course and can cause high levels of disability and distress.

Disability services, are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the person's individual requirements and care needs.

The HSE funds a range of community services and supports to enable each individual with a disability, to achieve their full potential and maximise independence, including living as independently as possible. These are provided through acute and primary care services, along with specialist disability services as required by the person

The range of community services and supports provided to people with a disability include for example assisted living services (PA and Home Support), Therapy Services, Aids and Appliances and Respite Services.

Each Integrated Healthcare Area (IHA) 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.

The Clinical Lead for the National Clinical Program in Rehabilitation Medicine advises that currently, there is no separate 'pathway' for people with 'Functional Neurological Disorders/ 'Functional Neurological Symptoms Disorders.

These conditions occur across the population. GPs, Neurologists, Rehabilitation Medicine physicians, Paediatricians, Gerontologists, Psychiatrists etc (and to a lesser extent all specialists) will see people with such conditions.



In-patient rehabilitation services will take people with more severe 'Functional Neurological Disorders/ 'Functional Neurological Symptoms Disorders'.

There are a small number of people with very complex 'Functional Neurological Disorders/ 'Functional Neurological Symptoms Disorders'. Ideally the rehabilitation in these situations should have clinicians with special training/expertise in this area.

Specific expertise would include rehabilitation expertise in the nursing/medical/therapy staff for example in relational dynamics, eating disorders and personality and schema expertise. Input from Psychiatry with special expertise in this area is needed.

Yours Sincerely,

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Dr. Aoife O'Donohue,  
Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúntóir, Seirbhísí Mhíchumas, Rochtain agus Imeascadh,  
Assistant National Director, Disability Services, Transformation & Programme Coordination,  
Access & Integration