



Ceannasai na Seirbhísi Curam
Michumais - Lár na Tíre

FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus Lár na Tíre

Ionad Sláinte, An Mhí Bóthar Ard, An
Tulaigh Mhóir, Co. Uíbh Fhailí. R35 HP73

General Manager of Disability Services –
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13th May 2025

Mr. Tony McCormack T.D.
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Re: PQ ref 20768/25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if she will provide an update on the delivery of disability services in County Offaly, particularly in relation to access to assessment of need, early intervention, and supports for families with children who have additional needs; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy McCormack,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above representation. I have examined the matter and I outline the position as follows.

Children's services in Offaly are provided via two (2) Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT). Network 10 in Riverside, Tullamore provide services for children from Tullamore, Daingean, Clara, Banagher, Birr and Shinrone. Network 11 (Barrow), currently based in Spraoi Centre, Portlaoise, provide services for children from Portlaoise, and Edenderry.

The process for access to Assessment of Need (AON) requires completion of the Assessment of Need application form. On receipt of same this application is acknowledged within 10 working days. Parents can self-refer to the department. The application is screened by the Assessment Officer along with an Additional Information form and other sources of information that parents share. If the child is eligible for an assessment under AON they are then progressed for same. The current wait time for referral for an assessment under AON is 16 months. This untimely delay is due to increased workload and an increase in referral rate.

The National Programme called Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People is now implemented. Services are no longer divided into early intervention teams and school age teams. The Progressing Disability Service (PDS) model of service delivery is now team focused with functional family goals rather than blocks of intervention with individual disciplines as was the previous practice. There is now an interdisciplinary team, Children's Disability Network Team, which provides a more

integrated model of service delivery. A cornerstone of the provision of supports is the Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP).

When children are accepted to the CDNT they receive contact and invites to a variety of supports. These include “Welcome to Service” talk and other universal supports. They will then be invited to attend an initial appointment to formulate an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP). Following the development of the IFSP the parents may be invited to a targeted support workshop or, where necessary, individual sessions or group sessions with the children will be carried out.

I trust the above is in order but please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Mulvihill
General Manager, Disability Services, Midlands CHO8