

4<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Mr. Aindrias Moynihan, T.D.,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Dublin 2.

**PQ ref 7852/25**

**“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the efforts being taken to ensure adequate access to residential respite services for young people with complex needs in the Cork area; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Moynihan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to respond to your parliamentary question submitted to the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth for response.

The Cork Regional Children’s Respite Forum, established in 2022, manages referrals and the allocation of respite and/or home supports for children with complex disabilities, up to the age of 18 years and who are in receipt of services from a Children’s Disability Network Team. The HSE is acutely aware of the demand for respite services and has significantly invested in respite services in recent years.

In Cork, overnight respite services for children under 18 years of age with an intellectual disability, physical disability or autism are delivered by Horizon (formerly COPE Foundation), Enable Ireland, St. Joseph’s Foundation, CoAction West Cork and the Brothers of Charity Southern Services. There are a total of 31 children’s respite beds.

Horizons are undertaking a reconfiguration of children’s respite delivery by splitting the services and current staffing resources across two centres (Ashville and An Sireach) catering to different profiles of need. Their plan is to increase service provision across both centres incrementally over the next 12 months. There is a projected increase of 70 bed nights per month for children at Ashville in addition to current provision of 140 per month at An Sireach.

A number of alternative day respite services are also provided for children. These comprise of *centre based* and *outreach* services. Day respite is provided in a variety of ways and settings such as in the home, in the community, during holiday time, as well as home share with host families and through after-school services.

Cork Kerry Disability Services has commissioned respite from the Rainbow Club who are currently providing 6 week blocks of respite services in the Cork area. The Rainbow Club provides for after-school supports, social groups, teen supports, adapted sports and additional activities on Saturdays.

Respite is allocated to children based on their individual needs, their compatibility with other service users and the knowledge/ skill set required by staff to support those needs within available resources.

We are continuing to engage with service providers in the area to progress plans for additional, much needed respite supports for children and young people with complex disability needs.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely,

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**Angela O'Neill**  
**Head of Disability Services**  
**HSE South West**

