



Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Slainte
Seirbhísi Pobaill (An Cabhán, Dún na
nGall, Liatroim, Muineachán &
Sligeach)
Áras Isacc Butt, Bealach Féich,
Tír Chonaill F93 YV9R

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1st April, 2025

Deputy Pearse Doherty
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ ref 7873/25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if she has considered the need for a dedicated children's respite centre in Donegal to address the growing need for respite hours in the county and the current lack of available respite for families; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Doherty,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if for response.

Having examined the matter, I can advise there are currently no plans to develop a dedicated children's respite centre in Co. Donegal. However, Donegal Disability Service are prioritising the resumption of respite services and optimisation of existing respite capacity for children and adults within the current respite facilities in Donegal as outlined below:

Name of Respite Centre	No of Respite Placements	Increased Capacity
Ballymacool Respite House Letterkenny	Five respite places for children and adults on alternative weeks	Ballymacool Respite House, increased its capacity from five to six days per week in 2024. It is planned to further increase respite capacity to seven days per week in the second quarter of 2025, dependent on the recruitment of additional staff. Donegal Disability Service and HSE Estates are currently exploring options to develop a single occupancy annexe on the Ballymacool Respite House site.

		This development will negate the need to regularly close four respite places to accommodate an adult or child who require single occupancy respite places going forward.
Riverwalk Respite House	Three respite places for children and adults on alternative weeks.	Riverwalk Respite House is due to recommence respite services on the 03.04.25 on a four day week basis. It is planned to further increase respite capacity to seven days per week in quarter four of 2025, dependent on the recruitment of the additional staff.
Seaview Respite House, Mountcharles	Four respite places for children and adults on alternative weeks	Seaview House continue to provide respite services seven days per week, following an increase from five days per week in 2023.
Drumboe Respite House	Five respite places will be available for children and adults on alternative weeks, when respite services resume in Drumboe House. This is planned for the first quarter of 2026. Drumboe House is currently closed to respite, due to the requirement to provide accommodation for four people with disabilities who would otherwise be homeless.	Plans to transition the adults who currently reside in Drumboe Respite House to Community Group Homes are at an advanced stage. It is planned to resume respite services in Drumboe House in the first quarter of 2026.

In recognition of the increasing demand for children's respite services in Donegal the following day respite and support options are available to children with disabilities, their families and carers:

Bluestack Special Needs Foundation - provide group activities and recreational clubs as well as direct supports to people themselves and to their families and carers.

iCARE - provide support, respite care and training to families of children with Autism in Inishowen

Spraoi Agus Sport - provide services and activities for families, children, as well as young people that are inclusive of disability and/or autism.

Disability Home Support Services – indirectly provide in home and outreach respite support services to children their families and carers through funded agencies or personal support grants.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mary McGroarty
A/Head of Service Disability Services
Community Services Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo
Seirbhisi Pobail An Cabhán, Dún na nGall, Liatroim, Muineachán & Sligeach