

**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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11th March, 2025

Deputy Charles Ward
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ ref 8190/25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the number of respite beds available to disability services in Donegal in 2023, 2024 and to date in 2025; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Ward,

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 response.

I have examined the matter and the table below outlines the total number and range of available respite beds for both children and adults with a disability in Co. Donegal from 2023 to date.

Respite Facility	Number of beds available	No. of bed nights available
Ballymacool Respite House, Letterkenny – Intellectual Disability (ID) Services	5 Beds	Ballymacool Respite House operates alternate weeks for 5 adults and 5 children on 6 nights per week = 30 bed nights per week on alternative weeks. Ballymacool House faces challenges with compatibility due to the complex needs and behaviours of some service users which sometimes leads to under-utilisation of available beds during the week.
Seaview Respite House, Mountcharles – ID Services	4 Beds	Seaview House operates alternate weeks for 4 adults and 4 children on 7 nights per week = 28 bed nights per week on alternative weeks. Seaview House also faces challenges with compatibility due to the complex needs and behaviours of some service users sometimes leads to under-

		utilisation of available beds during the week.
Riverwalk Respite House, Carndonagh – ID Services	Currently closed for respite	<p>Donegal Disability Services are planning to reopen respite services at Riverwalk Respite House on four days per week from 3rd April 2025. Riverwalk Respite House has three beds which will operate on alternate weeks for 3 adults and 3 children.</p> <p>The following outlines the status of the outstanding staff positions at Riverwalk Respite House that are required to be filled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare Assistants (HCAs): Two HCA candidates are undergoing pre-employment clearance, while another has been cleared to begin work. • Staff Nurse: No interest has been expressed in the vacant staff nurse position in Riverwalk Respite House from the existing staff nurse panel. As a result, HSE Human Resources are extending the search to additional staff nurse panels in Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, and Monaghan Community Services. <p>Once these positions are filled, Donegal Disability Services plan to expand respite service provision in Riverwalk Respite House to seven days per week. In the meantime, the HSE workforce in Riverwalk Respite House will be supplemented by agency staff and bank staff to ensure safe staffing levels are in place to resume respite services.</p>
Drumboe Respite House, Stranorlar – ID Services (currently closed for respite)	4 Beds	Respite services at Drumboe Respite House are closed due to the need to provide emergency placements for four people with disabilities. Donegal Disability Services are making the necessary arrangements to find alternative accommodation for the people who currently reside in Drumboe House.
Fernhill Respite Centre, Letterkenny – Physical & Sensory (P&S) Disability Services	3 Beds	Fernhill Respite Centre operates respite for 2 - 3 adults on 3 nights per week = 6 - 9 bed nights per week (due to IPC recommendations, the number of clients varies based on the use of a bedroom for sleepover duty).

Cheshire Centre, Letterkenny – P&S Disability Services	1 Bed	Cheshire Centre operates 1 adult respite bed every week on 7 nights per week = 7 bed nights per week.
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Additional Respite Services and Supports available for Donegal service users

1. LauraLynn Children's Hospice – for children with life-limiting conditions (located in South Dublin, but accessed by children from Donegal)
2. Group Activities and Recreational Clubs - provided by organisations such as Bluestack Special Needs Foundation, iCARE, and Spraoi Agus Sport which are funded by the HSE.
3. In-home/Outreach Respite Care - provided by various organisations on behalf of the HSE and Tusla.
4. Service Provider Respite Care - professional care, including nursing which is provided through agency and can be in the individual's home or if preferred the individual can be taken on outings.
5. Disability Homecare Grant - financial support for in-home care.
6. Disability Respite Grant - financial support for respite care.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Denise Curran
A/Head of Service Disability Services
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Seirbhisi Pobail An Cabhán, Dún na nGall, Liatroim, Muineachán & Sligeach