



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  
Complex, National Technology Park,  
Castletroy, Limerick.

6<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Deputy Mark Ward,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [mark.ward@oireachtas.ie](mailto:mark.ward@oireachtas.ie)

**PQ: 40153/25**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the support that is in place for parents who, due to lengthy waiting times, paid for a private assessment of needs for their child only to find out much later that there are questions around the bona fides of the private psychologist qualifications; and if she will make a statement on the matter. -*

Dear Deputy Ward,

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

The HSE does not fund or reimburse any fees paid to private practitioners in any of the health service areas where assessments, interventions or therapies have been commissioned by the service user or their family directly.

The HSE has no mandate or financial mechanism to reimburse fees paid by families directly to private agencies for health services. If a parent or guardian has identified a private provider or assessor willing to carry out an Assessment on their child, they can discuss this with HSE representatives. If the provider has the appropriate qualifications and meets the HSE's criteria in relation to the relevant standards as outlined above, then they may be contracted to undertake assessments. The HSE will pay the provider/assessor directly for any assessment.

The HSE has no role in the registration of Psychologists. This is a matter for the Professional Regulatory Unit in the Department of Health. Although psychologists are not yet subject to CORU registration, the HSE ensures that all psychologists employed in our services are appropriately qualified. The HSE engages with CORU on a regular basis.

On occasion and in line with appropriate procurement procedures, Garda vetting and due diligence practice; private providers have been contracted to provide psychological assessments and / or interventions. In such instances, the HSE currently ensures that the contracted providers are appropriately qualified and that any assessments or interventions are provided in line with the appropriate standards.

**Targeted Initiative focused on long waiting families**

A waiting list initiative was launched in June 2024 targeting those families waiting longest for AONs, with the HSE reimbursing clinicians directly through the procurement of capacity from approved private providers. This provides a more equitable and fair approach rather than reimbursement of parents directly.

All aspects of the Assessment of Need process must be operated within the AON legislation, the HSE SOP and the iHIQA standards.

Some families source private assessments to facilitate access to educational supports such as special schools or classes. In many cases, these are unidisciplinary assessments which are usually accepted in the education sector. In general, HSE or HSE funded services, in line with best practice guidelines, use a multidisciplinary approach to assessment, specifically to ASD assessment. In these circumstances, while HSE services may take cognisance of any unidisciplinary reports that may be available, they will undertake a multidisciplinary assessment where appropriate, to confirm a diagnosis and to determine the necessary interventions.

Information received from the Health Regions indicates that under this targeted initiative, 4,976 AONs have been commissioned from private providers/assessors from June 2024 to June, 2025.



**It is important to note that children do not require an Assessment of Need as defined by the Disability Act (2005) in order to access a CDNT or Primary Care service.** They can be referred by a healthcare professional or parent/carer to the CDNT for children with complex needs as a result of their disability, or to Primary Care for children with non-complex needs

Yours Sincerely,

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Tom McGuirk,  
General Manager, Disability Services, Access & Integration