



12th August 2025.

Mr. Michael Cahill, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 41384/ 25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the reason such a small proportion of families accessing disability services in Kerry are currently assigned key workers under the individual family support plan model; and the steps being taken to ensure equity of access across counties.”

Dear Deputy Cahill,

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

Children’s Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) have been established to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area. HSE South West Children’s Disability Services provides fourteen CDNTs across the Cork Kerry region and these are managed by five lead agencies; Horizons, Brothers of Charity Southern Services, Enable Ireland, St. Joseph’s Foundation and CoAction West Cork. Eleven teams operate in Cork and three in Kerry.

Families accessing CDNT services may be assigned a key worker at different stages depending on their needs. A key worker may be assigned as part of an initial team assessment or to support in early years, transitioning to preschool, primary or secondary school or thereafter to adult services. Any member of the CDNT may be assigned as their key worker, depending on the needs of each child and family.

In circumstances where a key worker is not assigned, family queries are addressed via team members who are familiar with the needs of the child and family.



The importance of the key worker role is acknowledged and in that regard, there is ongoing engagement as part of the 2026 estimates process to secure funding for dedicated key worker roles for all CDNTs. HSE South West and its lead agency partners would welcome any additional resources that would facilitate the assignment of key workers for all families on our caseloads.

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

Yours sincerely,

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