



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.

18th August 2025

Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú,
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: ruairi.omurchu@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 43550/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality to provide the progress being made in workforce planning for staffing of CDNTs and disability services; and if she will make a statement on the matter..

Dear Deputy Ó Murchú,

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

In line with the Progressing Disability Services model, all 93 CDNTs, aligned to 96 Community Healthcare Networks (CHNs) across the country, are in place and are providing services and supports for children aged from birth to 18 years of age.

Each CDNT covers a specific geographical area and holds a waiting list for children with complex needs residing in that area.

There are currently 2,009 WTE working in 93 x Children's Disability Network Teams across the country. There has been a net increase of + 415 WTE in the past 18 months and a decrease in vacancy rates from 29% to 18% since October 2023.

The most recent CDNT Workforce Review Report (based on workforce review in April 2025) is now available on the HSE Website at the following link:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/>

This report shows continuing increase in workforce in CDNT's and a reduction in vacancy rate.

There is ongoing recruitment initiatives and efforts to fill funded vacancies and work continues at pace to increase staffing rates across CDNTs. The HSE and CDNT Lead Agencies work actively and collaboratively to improve and optimise recruitment into CDNTs, which in turn has a positive impact on retaining the staff currently working in CDNTs.

Actions to enhance our attraction, recruitment and retention efforts for the CDNTs and for all Disability Services are delivered at a multi-agency level and include:

- Significant recruitment efforts and activities across HSE, Section 38s and Section 39s which has reduced the CDNT vacancy rate to 18%.
- Sustained outreach and engagement with applicant pools and future potential workforce through multiple engagements to secondary schools, Higher Education Institutes, international applicants. These engagements represent the wider HSE, Section 38s and Section 39s and showcase CDNTs and all Disabilities Services as career destinations.
- The first ever virtual career fair "Disabilities Virtual Career Fair" took place on 15th May 2025 representing CDNTs and all Disability services across the professions.
- Ongoing webinars with applicant pools dovetailing with job offers with a noted increase in registrations with CareerHub talent pool and increase in job uptake following webinars.



- Direct support to Section 38s and 38s CDNT workforce efforts- funded agencies can now access HSE national recruitment panels and new grad panels which increases their ability to fill roles in an expedited way through accessing the relevant candidate panels. Section 38s and 39s now use www.hse.ie/jobs and HSE talent pools registered with the HSE's CareerHub portal (48k+ registered applicant pools) which substantially expands their advertising and engagement into targeted applicant pools.
- Launch of under/ post graduate sponsorship programme to job match 2025 relevant graduates. Increased clinical placements – placements into CDNTs have increased by 30% in the past 2 years.
- The HSE maintains a panel of external suppliers to support international recruitment of therapists and other Health and Social Care Professionals into Disability Services. The procurement model in use allows for the continual addition of qualified providers to expand the HSE's access to global candidate markets to ensure all relevant and appropriate pipelines are used.
- The HSE has developed a comprehensive engagement platform for candidates which now hosts 47k members. There is a specific area developed for the Disability services which markets its unique features and opportunities <https://careerhub.hse.ie/hse-childrens-disability-network-teams/>.

Funded disability organisations can now advertise on the HSE jobs page, giving them access to the 47k active members on the HSE career Hub. In affect this means as jobs are advertised in disabilities, candidates will receive notifications relevant to their criteria. Funded agencies that use this route are reporting a rise in eligible applicants to fill their vacant posts, which is resulting in expedited filling of vacant jobs.

- In a 'Grow Our Own' approach, the HSE is working with Educational Training Boards to build and train future workforces to meet the needs of the service.
- The HSE is also actively engaging in the development of apprenticeship programmes.
- A Student Sponsorship initiative was launched for Disabilities in early April to incentivise and expedite the recruitment of new graduates into Disability roles - this is a financial award mapped to a job match for Speech & Language Therapists and also Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Social Work and this will benefit all regions.
- Multiple talent and attraction events took place in 2024 and continue into 2025, including jobs fairs, school summits and the national ploughing championships. These outreach events serve to optimise interest in and applications for roles in the health services

These activities form part of an ongoing suite of initiatives to populate vacancies and other HSCP vacancies, to increase retention and improve the capacity to deliver services in Disability Services utilising all recruitment markets- both domestic and international.

Yours sincerely,

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Dr Aoife O'Donohue,
Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Cúntóir, Seirbhísí Mhíchumas, Rochtain agus Imeascadh,
Assistant National Director, Disability Services, Transformation & Programme Coordination, Access & Integration