



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
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12^h August 2025

Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
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Dublin 2.
E-mail: richard.boydbarrett@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 44332/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the estimated cost of transitioning all under 65s with a disability residential services need out of nursing homes and into community-based residential services.

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

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

The HSE established a dedicated funding stream as part of the National Service Plan to enable people under the age of 65 years living in Nursing Homes to move to homes of their choosing in the community, with support. This initiative is in line with the Programme for Government and the UNCRPD, as well as Time to Move On Policy and the Ombudsman's Report into the placement of persons under 65 years of age in nursing homes.

In 2019, the Ombudsman commenced a systemic investigation into people under 65, living in nursing homes (NHs), and in May 2021 "*Wasted Lives: Time for a better future for younger people in nursing homes*" was published.

The Ombudsman's research suggests that nursing homes in general are designed for frail older people in the latter stage of their life. They are therefore not equipped to provide the rehabilitation that a younger person living with a disability may require, nor do they provide a social model of care focused on enabling the people concerned to return to their communities. Such a model of care is essential to implement the Transforming Lives Programme and to meet the commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The Ombudsman's report details a series of findings and nineteen recommendations covering a range of themes including funding, informed consent, quality of life, access to services, navigating the system and policy and human rights.

National and Regional U65 Structures and Supports

In response to the Ombudsman's report, the HSE is co-ordinating a programme of work at both the Health Regions (HRs)/CHO operational and at national levels, to progressively address the Wasted Lives Report review and implement the report's recommendations for which the HSE has accountability.

Nationally, the Implementation Steering Committee (ISC) oversees the programme of work. The membership represents, Acute Services, Older Persons services, Disability and Primary Care Services, along with Clinical Leads and representatives for people with lived experience. The ISC meets on a bi-monthly basis.

Additionally, there is an U65 Programme Office and the Implementation Project Team. The implementation programme has been divided into 5 work streams with 5 work stream leads.

The work streams are as follows:

1. Quality of life and model of service development – "*A Place to Call Home*"
2. Funding and personal finances



3. Services access and navigation
4. Informed consent policy and human rights
5. NH U65 survey (previously SRF project)

At local Health Regions/CHOs, there is an identified U65 lead per CHO, who is responsible for progressing U65s transitions and working with individual disability case managers. The operational activity is supported by two U65 Trackers. Firstly the U65 Operational tracker which manages the U65 programme within each CHO and provides data on U65 operational activity for the National Office. Secondly, the U65 Finance Tracker, which manages and provides governance over the U65 budget within the CHO and Nationally.

Transitions to the Community

Including this year's transitions and based on the data we have from the U65 Operational and Finance Trackers, as of June 2025 there has been in total 106 transitions since the project commenced. There are 16 further new transfers, with reserved funding, expected to move before end 2025. As of end of 2025, estimated total of transitions is expected to be 122.

The majority moved to community residential placements including sheltered living, specialised and residential placements, with other individuals returning to their own/family home or to a new personal home.

The U65 Operational Tracker, monitors the progress of individuals who are in active planning for potential discharge to the community in the short to medium term.

The National Mapping Survey of U65s in NHs was completed in 2023 and direct survey for service users is currently open. This survey is an additional option for U65 NH residents and their families to engage with the HSE and to start transition planning back to the community, if that is their wish.

Estimated Costs

As of May 2025, based on Nursing Homes Support Scheme/Fair Deal (NHSS) data there were 1,227 U65 residents in NHs.

Table 1 below, provides a summary of the average cost to support every 100 disabled people under 65 to move out of nursing homes into appropriate housing such as assisted community homes, based on the U65 Financial tracker June 2025, and the % transfer to each community placement option and average placement costs to date.

U65 Community Transfers	% of Transfers to Date	per 100 Transfers	Avg. cost per placement	Total Cost
Residential Placement	44%	44	264,168	116233.92
Community Residential - Specialised placement	25%	25	210,341	5258525
New personal home	9%	9	203,894	1835046
Return to own/family home	22%	22	105,127	2312794
			Total	9522598.92

People under 65 years of age continuing a NH placement and Enhanced Quality of Life Supports

Enhanced Quality of Life Supports (EQLS) are aimed at improving an individual's quality of daily life in a nursing home, and where appropriate, to support the pre-transition work, to help individuals prepare for a move back into the community.

The funding for EQLS as part of the U65 programme has been funded through the overall programme budget.

In 2024, EQLS allocations funded 44 individuals prior to October 2024. Using once-off funds, after October 2024, a further 110 individuals were supported with EQLS. These supports ranged from iPads, Laptops, Audio Books & Head Phones, TV in own room, Motorised Wheelchairs, Exercise Bikes, PA (until year end), Support Chairs etc.



Based on data from the U65 Operational Tracker, for the majority of those continuing a NH placement, the reason given is due to their current personal will and preference. Disability services recognise that the issue of will and preference is changeable and that there needs to be planned engagements with individuals to better understand their reasons why they may wish to stay.

This is followed by those who are staying due to their assessment of needs requirements. (There are also a number of people who have complex medical and social care needs that require intensive nursing and medical care that cannot be provided in a home setting or by family members).

Bearing in mind the uniqueness and complexities of each person's situation, choice, social and medical/care needs and requirements, all options must be explored and considered.

Yours sincerely,

Gerry Tully, Adult Disability Services, Access & Integration