



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 July 2025

Deputy Grace Boland
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: grace.boland@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 35083/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the locations around the country where community health organisations are providing specific services for adults with an autistic diagnosis; the staffing cohort at each location; the number of patients benefitting from the services at each location, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Boland,

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

Disability services are provided based on the presenting needs of an individual rather than by the diagnosis of the individual or the actual type of disability or service required. Services are provided following individual assessment according to the person's individual service and support needs. For adults who may be autistic, GP's may refer to adult psychology in Primary Care or the Multidisciplinary Adult Disability Team.

It is acknowledged however, that the current system is very variable across the country and does not adequately serve the needs of autistic adults. The HSE does not currently collect information specifically on adults identified with autism on a national basis, in many areas, adult assessments are only available privately; this is an unsatisfactory situation, and we are working to address this.

Service Improvement Programme

The Service Improvement Programme Board for the Autistic Community has been tasked with leading out on an agreed set of priorities that will have greatest impact in terms of shaping how services can be delivered to autistic people. It is also tasked with creating greater awareness of autism in terms of supporting clinicians, other staff and local communities in promoting inclusion and fostering positive attitudes.

The Assessment and Pathways Working Group was established to develop a standardised assessment approach for use in all services dealing with the assessment of Autism to ensure that every assessment is of an acceptable and agreed standard, regardless of which service is being accessed. In addition, it seeks to agree a standardised service user journey and the implementation of a consistent core service offering across those providing services to people who are Autistic. The Working Group, including people with lived experience of autism, has consulted widely with key stakeholders in the design and formulation stage of the project; which has been particularly important in the context of the implementation of a tiered approach to assessment. Its main work focus is:

- To develop an operational model for a tiered approach to Autism Assessment through developing clear and functioning pathways to services.
- To strengthen Disability, Primary Care and Mental Health services by operating a shared Model of Service.



- An implementation plan to include training which takes cognisance of existing policies of the HSE.

The 2nd and final Phase of the Protocol piloting is now complete, as is the independent evaluation undertaken by the Centre for Effective Services. Following incorporation of learnings from the evaluation and further consultation with professional bodies and civil society, we anticipate that national rollout of the final version of the protocol will commence with training in each of the 6 Health Regions in Quarter 4 2025. The Protocol will be reviewed annually with new learnings incorporated as needs be.

Yours Sincerely,

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