



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,

6th May 2025

Deputy Gary Gannon,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: gary.gannon@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Gannon,

The Health Service Executive Disability Services has been requested to reply to you in the context of the following parliamentary question:

PQ: 10802/25

To ask the Minister for Health the measures in place to ensure that individuals diagnosed with Korsakoff syndrome are not discriminated against when seeking access to rehabilitation services; and the steps being taken to improve the accessibility of such services for individuals with alcohol-related brain injuries.

HSE Response

Health Services are provided based on the assessed needs of the individual rather than by diagnosis. It is this clinical assessment that determines the appropriate pathway for services, including Primary Care, Disability Services, Older Persons Services and Mental health Services as appropriate to their care needs. This applies to all people who present to Health Services, including individuals with acquired brain injury (ABI).

The list of service provision includes:

- Acute Hospital Services
- Mental Health Services
- Primary Care Services
- Health and Wellbeing
- A range of multi-disciplinary services at local level providing services in the community to people with ABI
- A range of long term assisted living supports, usually contracted by the health service from the non-statutory sector.
- Disability Services including Respite Services, Personal Assistance and Home Support services.
- Advocacy services



These services are provided directly by the health service and a number of non statutory organisations across Disability Services, General Community Services, Acute Hospital Services and Services for Older People.

Community Funded Schemes

The Community Funded Schemes is a collective name for all of the many products, supports, supplies, appliances and aids that are provided through community services. There is an extensive range of assistive technology products and services provided to hundreds of thousands of individuals living with a wide variety of different medical conditions or disability, under the CFS.

The HSE currently spends in excess of €250m per annum on these products and services. The scale of the programme is extensive and many thousands of items are provided from community based services across the country. Every PHN, continence advisor, clinical nurse specialist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, dietician, speech and language therapist, podiatrist and orthotist, who prescribes an appliance, a sip feed, a prosthetic, oxygen or one of the many thousands of items used to support service users in the community, has a role to play in delivery of these extensive services.

The budget for CFS sits within the Primary Care function of the CHO's. Based on satisfying the eligibility criteria, people living with disabilities are like other people living with a broad range of medical conditions, eligible for Medical/surgical aids and appliances that facilitate and/or maintain mobility and/or functional independence. The HSE provides assistive devices to thousands of people with disabilities to enable them to maintain their health, optimise functional ability and to facilitate care in their primary care setting.

The HSE National Office for Human Rights and Equality Policy

This National Office aims to:

- Build skills, knowledge and confidence of staff
- Achieve HSE Compliance with Human Rights legislation
- Develop and promote HSE Human Rights and Equality Policy
- Influence legislative and organisational change to ensure that the human rights and dignity of each person using HSE services are respected.

One of the work streams of the office is Universal Access- Supports for people with Disabilities in the HSE under Part 3 Disability Act 2005.

The HSE appointed a National Specialist in Accessibility who provides guidance, advice and strategic support in the promotion of access for people with disabilities. The purpose of the role is also to develop a strategic framework for the implementation of Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005 in the HSE. The post is based within the Advocacy Unit and works closely with the HSE National Disability Unit.

Please see:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/national-office-human-rights-equality-policy/universal-access/>

Accessible Health and Social Care Services

The HSE has a network of access officers located throughout the country across community and acute services to support people with disabilities accessing health and social care services. Contact details for access officers in the HSE can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/yourhealthservice/access/accessofficers>.

To support the work of the Access Officers, the HSE published the *HSE National Guidelines for Accessible Health and Social Care Services*. These Guidelines offer practical guidance to access officers and staff about how they can provide accessible health and social care services. A review is currently underway of these Guidelines to ensure that they reflect the most up to date best practice and legislation with regard to supporting people accessing health and social care service services.. The current list of access officers will also be reviewed.

Once the updated guidelines and the review of access officers has been completed, the revised guidelines will be widely disseminated. Revised training will be provided to Access Officers which will include an emphasis on enhancing the



skills and competencies of access officers in understanding the supports that people may require when accessing health and social care services.

Advocacy Services

An additional support and service for people with acquired brain injury include advocacy services such as the National Advocacy Services and SAGE.

The National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS) continues to work on a range of issues, including housing, healthcare, and representation of individual preferences for people with disabilities.

Please see:

<https://advocacy.ie/>

Yours Sincerely,

Gerry Tully
Assistant National Director,
Access and Integration,
Adult Disability Services

