

28th March 2025

Mr. Pa Daly, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2.

PQ ref 11538/25

“To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth , the number of respite beds available for people with a disability in CHO4 in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and to date in 2025, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Daly,

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

The HSE and its funded agencies provide respite care for children and adults with disabilities. Respite can occur in a variety of settings for various lengths of time, depending on the needs of the individual service user and their family or carer, and according to available resources.

In 2022, HSE South West Disability Services established a Children’s Regional Respite Forum and an Adult Regional Respite Forum. Each forum manages the referrals and respite service provision for the Cork and Kerry population. The overall purpose of each forum is to ensure there is equitable access to respite services consistent with each person’s assessed need and preference. Service provider representatives and HSE personnel comprise membership of the fora.

Children’s Respite Services Cork and Kerry

Overnight respite services for children under 18 years of age with an intellectual disability, physical disability or autism are delivered by a range of organisations: namely, St. John of Gods, Horizons (formerly Cope Foundation), Enable Ireland, St. Josephs Foundation, CoAction and Brothers of Charity Southern Services with a total of 39 beds.

Horizons are undertaking a reconfiguration of children's respite delivery by splitting the services and current staffing resources across two centres (Ashville and An Sireach) catering to different profiles of need. Their plan is to increase service provision across both centres incrementally over the next 12 months. There is a projected increase of 70 bed nights per month for children at Ashville in addition to current provision of 140 per month at An Sireach.

Adult Respite Services Cork and Kerry

Residential respite services for adults in Cork is delivered by Brothers of Charity Southern Services, Horizons, St Joseph's Foundation, CoAction, Enable Ireland, RehabCare and Abode. There are 88 residential respite beds comprising of 28 full time places and 60 part time places being provided.

HSE South West Disability Services have worked to improve access to residential (overnight) respite services for adults with disabilities in Cork in recent years. This has resulted in the establishment of a regional respite house for those residing in Cork which provides 5 beds on a full-time basis.

There are two respite houses for adults in Kerry – one in Listowel for those residing in North Cork and one in Cahersiveen for those residing in South Kerry. The North Kerry service has recently gone through a tender process and is due to reopen in Quarter 2 2025. There are a further 6 respite beds in houses operated by Kerry Parents and Friends Association (KPFA). These historical respite beds provide supports for adults attending KPFA services.

Data

The HSE National Business Intelligence Unit (BIU) collects data on overnight respite. Regrettably, I am unable to provide you with data from 2020 to 2022 as the data is no longer available on the BIU system due an update of data sets. The following table provides the number of respite overnights delivered in Cork and Kerry in 2023 and 2024. Data for Quarter 1 (January to March) 2025 will be available from mid May 2025.

Number of overnights accessed by people with a disability (ID/ Autism/ Physical & Sensory Disability) in Cork and Kerry.		
2023	2024	2025
16,822	17,181	Q1 Data will be available in mid May 2025



Despite the temporary closure of one Kerry respite house the data in the above table shows that the number of overnight respite increased by 359 nights in 2024 when compared to 2023.

Alternative respite models

In addition to residential respite, HSE South West Disability Services provide a range of alternative respite models for children and adults. These include afterschool clubs and in home support for children and adults, outreach supports and holiday breaks for adults. This ensures that respite is provided in the manner which best meets the needs of the child/adult and their families.

HSE South West Disability Services is acutely aware of the demand for respite services and, on receipt of very welcome funding, has significantly invested in respite services in recent years. HSE South West Disability Services continues to invest in respite services, proactively seek alternative respite models and utilise all available funding to provide respite services for all children and adults who require them. HSE South West Disability Services are working with service providers to create new residential and alternative respite supports for children and adults in 2025 and welcomes any additional funding to continue to invest in these vital services.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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

