



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,  
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12<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Deputy Jennifer Whitmore  
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Dublin 2.  
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**PQ: 24544/25**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the number of children that are seen on a weekly basis by occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and psychologists, excluding those receiving initial assessments, in each quarter of each year from 2023 to April 2024, by county, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Whitmore,

Thank you for your Parliamentary Question referenced above, which has been forwarded to me for direct reply. It has been clarified that this question concerns the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs).

### **Childrens Disability Services**

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

The model of service for all CDNTs is family-centred and based on the needs of the child. This includes universal, targeted and specialised supports and interventions, as appropriate to the individual child and family. It is based on the objectives of empowering and supporting parents and others who are with the child on a daily basis to facilitate the child's developmental needs.

The CDNTs are currently providing services and supports for 43,000 children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow. However, there are significant challenges for CDNTs including:

- Significant staffing vacancies
- Growth in numbers of children with complex needs as a result of their disability.
- Growth in demand for Assessment of Need, diverting further resources away from interventions

### **Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People**

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People is a targeted Service Improvement Programme to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for all children with complex needs as a result of a disability and their families. It sets out the overall aim for Children's Disability Services, provided by the HSE and its partner agencies, for every child to have a childhood of inclusive experiences where they can have fun, learn, develop interests and skills, and form positive relationships with others in a range of different settings.

The Roadmap has four Working Groups which report into a Service Improvement Programme Board every month, which in turn reports to the Roadmap Oversight Group, chaired by the Minister of State.

These groups include:



Working Group 1: **Integrated Children's Services** – has responsibility for the implementation of National Access Policy (NAP) and the Primary Care, Disability, CAMHS Joint Working Protocol (JWP), Equity of Access to Aids and Appliances across all CHOs; and the Review of HSE Tusla Joint Protocol.

Working Group 2: **Service Access and Improvement** – has responsibility for Waitlist Management and Services; Optimising Teams Efficiencies, Effectiveness and Governance; AONs overdue for completion; and the development of a National Capital plan to enable all staff of a CDNT to be co-located.

Working Group 3: **Workforce** – has 21 actions dedicated to Retention of specialised CDNT staff, Recruitment of new graduates and experienced staff for all CDNTs Deployment of Students/Trainees/New Graduates; and Development of Existing Staff.

Working Group 4: **Communication and Engagement** – has responsibility for developing and ensuring the delivery of a rolling Communication Plan for the Roadmap and CDNT service, which is a key priority; review and updating the HSE PDS Website to meet information needs of families, further Staff Engagement and Workshop days and ensuring sustainability of the Family Forums and Family Representative Groups.

### **Number of children seen by CDNTs.**

The CDNT Model of Service is interdisciplinary. Statistics on the number of interventions provided for children and/or their families by the team rather than individual members are gathered manually on a monthly basis.

The following children were seen by one or more members of a CDNT in the following months;

	<b>April 2023</b>	<b>September 2023</b>	<b>December 2023</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>September 2024</b>	<b>December 2024</b>	<b>April 2025</b>
<b>Initial Contacts</b>	973	1,063	791	954	551	448	820
<b>Individual one to one appointment</b>	8,347	11,728	9,297	13,624	11,592	8,922	11,990
<b>Group interventions</b>	1,848	3,104	2,110	4,282	2,571	1,807	2,847

### **National Information Management System -CDNT IMS**

Historically CDNT data for children's disability services provided by section 38 and section 39 providers has not been available nationally. The establishment of CDNTs in 2021 has facilitated the collection of this data. A National Management Information System for all 93 CDNTs is being rolled out and when implemented, will provide more detailed data on the number of children seen and the number and types of supports provided for each child across all CDNTs.

Pending full roll-out, manual data collection is on-going.

Yours Sincerely,

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