



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,
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4th July 2025

Deputy David Cullinane,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 28606/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the estimated cost of replacement residential places to complete de-congregation; the current and capital cost; and the number of places required.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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

De-congregation

In June 2011 the Report “Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A Strategy for Community Inclusion” was published, which identified that in 2008 approximately 4,000 individuals with disabilities lived in congregated type settings, defined as where ten or more people reside in a single living unit or are campus based. It found that notwithstanding the commitment and initiative of dedicated staff and management, that there were a significant number of people still experiencing institutional living conditions where they lacked basic privacy and dignity, and lived their lives apart from any community and family.

The report recommended a seven year timeframe for the implementation of the policy from 2012 - 2019 and the 2016 Programme for Government identifies that there should be a one- third reduction in the number of individuals residing on congregated settings by the year 2021, which reflects the continued commitment of the Government to the policy of decongregation, whilst acknowledging that the process of supporting each person to transition from a congregated setting to a community based service in a sustainable and safe way requires planning and time.

The HSE Time To Move On policy is supporting people to progress from campus based/ institutional settings to community based homes with support. The on-going commitment of the HSE to the vision of “Time to Move on” has been fundamental in bringing about meaningful and sustainable change for approximately 2,500 individuals since the programme began and is enabling these individuals to live ordinary lives in ordinary places in the community.

Transforming Lives Time to Move on From Congregated Settings Subgroup – Location Review Group Report: Revised Register of Congregated Settings 2019 recommended periodic reviews of residential settings to ensure an accurate register is maintained and a review was carried out between July 2023 and March 2024 by way of site visits and data collection. This review not only enabled the HSE to confirm the number of individuals remaining in the HSE tracked settings it also assisted with prioritisation of the remaining settings for funding over the next 1 – 10 years.

At the end of December 2023 there were 1,415 individuals remaining in the HSE tracked congregated settings.

It is important to acknowledge that due to varying reasons including personal health, medical reasons and end of life care, there continues to be a small number of admissions to congregated settings each



year. It is equally important to acknowledge, as a result of an ageing population within Congregated Settings, that there continues to be a number of RIPs each year.

The HSE continues to support individuals currently residing in congregated settings, to move into more appropriate community and residential settings. At the end of May 2025 there were 10 transitions; the target is to facilitate the movement of 21 people from congregated to community settings in 2025.

Costs

It is important to note that the cost of de-congregation varies in accordance with the support and care needs of each individual person.

In some instances, transitioning from a house on a campus (congregated setting) to houses in the community is cost neutral or minimal funding is required depending on the current set up on campus. In such cases, revenue funding and non pay budgets are currently in place and the staff will transition with the individuals.

The cost of any particular project is directly related to the scale and scope of said project. In addition, the cost varies depending on the requirements and needs of people availing of support in each location. The Design and Build and/or Purchase and Refurbishment of a building that meets all regulatory requirements, is also market dependent.

It is estimated that the cost related to staffing and operating costs for a new service i.e. standard 4 bedded house, in the community, for individuals with high support needs is circa €1m per annum.

The capital cost for a new 4 bedded house is circa 1 million to build to the specification required to meet the needs of people with complex disabilities.

The National Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 places responsibility for the provision of housing with the Department of Housing and it is the responsibility of the HSE to provide additional supports related to care needs. The HSE and Local Authorities are required to work together to map the need and to develop plans for delivering housing to people with disabilities.

There are currently circa 1,300 individuals remaining in congregated settings as per the HSE definition in Time to Move on from Congregated Settings.

Work remains on-going to address the key challenges arising in relation to the procurement of appropriate housing in a buoyant housing market, the ongoing challenges recruiting staff across a range of disciplines and grades, and the undertaking of necessary works to ensure HIQA compliance – which must be secured before any new facility can become operational.

Yours Sincerely,

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