



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.

8th October 2025

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

PQ: 52587/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the number of children on waiting lists for initial contact with a children's disability network team at the end of September in each year 2022 to 2025, for each team, in tabular form.

PQ: 52588/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the number and percentage of children in receipt of partial services from a children's disability network team, for each team, in tabular form.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

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

Childrens Disability Services

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

Each CDNT covers a specific geographical area and holds a waiting list for children with complex needs residing in that area.

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 almost 45,000 children and strategies and supports for urgent cases on the waitlist where staffing resources allow.

The HSE's Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023 – 2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People, 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, is well advanced in its delivery

The Roadmap has four Working Groups and by year end, 50 of its 60 goals will have been achieved. The remaining goals and new initiatives will continue being implemented into and throughout 2026 to drive ongoing service development. These include:

- Ongoing recruitment and CDNT staff retention initiatives (see below)
- Development of a **National Online Resources Platform** to provide one reliable source of critical information and supports for children with disabilities and their families, awaiting and in health services, that are easy to understand, accessible, timely, transparent and useful at all stages of their engagement with services.



- Implementation of a robust **National Communications Plan** at National Regional and local levels to provide more consistent, regular, transparent, and factual and useful information for key stakeholders and most importantly for families.
- The Roadmap's Service Improvement Programme Board has approved a **standardised Initial CDNT pathway** for children from waitlist to completion of their Initial Contact intervention.
- Work is now commencing on developing an onward, standard **CDNT Service pathway** from the Initial Contact intervention through services to discharge, to drive consistency of practice across all 93 teams, fair access to services for all children based on need, and clarity for families.

While there are almost 45,000 on the CDNT caseload currently, there are 10,579 on the CDNT waiting list.

However, 1,052 children (&/or their parents), who are on the CDNT waiting list, participated in one or more individual and/or group intervention appointments during August 2025.

In addition, between Jan 1st 2025 and Aug 31st 2025:

- Although 6,998 new children were referred to CDNTs, CDNT waiting list has been reduced by 18% from 12,920 to 10,579 children
- Open CDNT caseload has increased by 5% from 42,836 to 44,994
- 4,950 children have received their Initial Contact intervention.

The CDNTs continue to optimise their clinical resources available, providing online and in person group and one on one interventions based on individual children and families' needs and for waitlisted children, drop in or planned advice clinics. Where resources allow, one on one interventions are provided where critical.

Waiting List for the Childrens Disability Services

Historically the number of children waitlisted 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 Information Management System for all 93 CDNTs is being rolled out and when implemented, will provide current data on waiting lists and other details for all CDNTs.

Pending full roll-out to all 93 CDNTs, manual data collection is currently in place nationally as an interim measure.

Prior to 2023, CDNT data was not collated nationally. The table below is the validated data for the end of August 2025 activity reports. This shows the number of children that are waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT in the 6 Regional Healthcare Areas (RHAs). September 2025 data is not yet available.

Please see Appendix 1 for the CDNT Interim metrics (waiting for an initial contact with a CDNT) for the end of September 2023 and 2024.

Table 1: End of August 2025

National CDNT Interim Metrics (August 2025)	HSE West and North West	HSE Midwest	HSE South West	HSE Dublin and South East	HSE Dublin Midlands	HSE Dublin and North East	Total
No. of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	209	159	163	141	277	257	1206
No. of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	89	162	125	168	243	248	1035
No. of children waiting 7-12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	72	232	147	258	393	291	1393
No. of children waiting over 12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	162	670	191	1958	2101	1863	6945
Total no. of children on the CDNT waiting list @ month end.	532	1223	626	2525	3014	2659	10,579



With regard to the number of children in receipt of partial services from each of the children's disability network teams, this level of detail required is not currently available but will be once all teams are on the CDNTIMS in 2026.

However please see the table below which provides information on services provided. There are 44,994 children on the CDNTs caseload and whilst not all received services this month, they may have last month, based on multiple factors including:

- Child and family availability (decreases during peak holiday times/school closures)
- Status of their current IFSP in operation e.g. active therapies or currently applying strategies learned before returning for further supports.
- Waitlisted for 1 or more disciplines

Table 2 End of August 2025

National CDNT Interim Metrics (August 2025)	HSE West and North West	HSE Midwest	HSE South West	HSE Dublin and South East	HSE Dublin Midlands	HSE Dublin and North East	Total
No. of children &/or their parents who participated in an initial contact this month	30	24	44	78	164	132	472
No. of children &/or their parents who participated in individual intervention appointment this month	932	662	1401	1834	2807	2719	10355
No. of children &/or their parents who participated in a group intervention appointment this month	142	198	250	183	176	351	1300
Total No. of children &/or their parents who participated in an initial contact, an individual or group intervention appointment this month	1104	884	1695	2095	3147	3202	12127
No. of children on open caseload @ month end	5913	6042	7649	6506	9616	9268	44994

Ongoing Actions to address waiting lists

As of April 2025 there were 2,009 WTE working in 93 x Children's Disability Network Teams across the country. There has been a net increase of + 415 WTE in the past 18 months and a decrease in vacancy rates from 29% to 18% since October 2023. The most recent CDNT Workforce Review Report (based on workforce review in April 2025) is now available on the HSE Website at the following link:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/>

This report shows continuing increase in workforce in CDNT's and a reduction in vacancy rate.



Workforce: Recruitment and Retention

There are ongoing recruitment initiatives and efforts to fill funded vacancies and work continues at pace to increase staffing rates across CDNTs. The HSE and CDNT Lead Agencies work actively and collaboratively to improve and optimise recruitment into CDNTs, which in turn has a positive impact on retaining the staff currently working in CDNTs.

Actions to enhance our attraction, recruitment and retention efforts are delivered at a multi-agency level and include:

- Significant recruitment efforts and activities across HSE, Section 38s and Section 39s which has reduced the vacancy rate to 18%.
- Sustained outreach and engagement with applicant pools and future potential workforce through multiple engagements to secondary schools, Higher Education Institutes, international applicants. These engagements represent the wider HSE, Section 38s and Section 39s and showcase CDNTs and Disabilities as career destination.
- The first ever virtual career fair “Disabilities Virtual Career Fair” took place on 15th May 2025 representing CDNTs and all Disability services across the professions.
- Ongoing webinars with applicant pools dovetailing with job offers with a noted increase in registrations with CareerHub talent pool and increase in job uptake following webinars.
- Direct support to Section 38s and 38s CDNT workforce efforts- funded agencies can now access HSE national recruitment panels and new grad panels which increases their ability to fill roles in an expedited way through accessing the relevant candidate panels. Section 38s and 39s now use www.hse.ie/jobs and HSE talent pools registered with the HSE’s CareerHub portal (48k+ registered applicant pools) which substantially expands their advertising and engagement into targeted applicant pools.
- First sponsorship programme for final year under and post graduate students of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and social worker was run this year with all graduates now paneled with the HSE being offered a post in a CDNT. This programme will be extended, pending funding, to 2026 graduates and to include dietetics.
- Increased student placements on CDNTs to grow our own workforce. Student placements in CDNTs have increased by 55% in the past 2 years.

These activities form part of an ongoing suite of initiatives to populate vacancies, increase retention rates and improve capacity to deliver Disability services and will continue throughout 2025.

Yours Sincerely,

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



Appendix

Table 3. CDNT Interim metrics End of September 2023

National CDNT interim Metrics. End of September 2023	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8	CHO 9	TOTALS
No. of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	113	234	296	148	104	74	104	361	71	1505
No. of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	105	138	355	131	88	106	188	368	79	1558
No. of children waiting 7-12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	104	124	260	191	232	190	418	501	195	2215
No. of children waiting over 12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	119	427	404	517	1496	923	1818	1149	2470	9323
Total no. of children waiting for an initial contact @ month end	441	923	1315	987	1920	1293	2528	2379	2815	14601

Table 4. CDNT Interim metrics End of September 2024

National CDNT Interim Metrics. End of September 2024	CHO 1	CHO 2	CHO 3	CHO 4	CHO 5	CHO 6	CHO 7	CHO 8	CHO 9	TOTALS
No. of children waiting 0-3 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	97	172	216	164	99	47	154	232	56	1237
No. of children waiting 4-6 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	61	146	208	122	90	88	181	176	57	1129



No. of children waiting 7-12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	29	188	334	147	134	118	340	370	200	1860
No. of children waiting over 12 months for an initial CDNT contact @ month end	266	386	546	369	1213	1207	1928	916	2364	9195
Total no. of children waiting for an initial contact @ month end	453	892	1304	802	1536	1460	2603	1694	2677	13421