



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  
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4<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Deputy Marie Sherlock,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [marie.sherlock@oireachtas.ie](mailto:marie.sherlock@oireachtas.ie)

**PQ: 56713/25**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the Department's forecasts for the number of day service places and for the number of residential places that will be required by adults with intellectual disability in the next five and ten years respectively.*

**PQ: 56719/25**

*To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the number of day services users who are adults with an intellectual disability across each integrated health area for each of the years 2020-2025.*

Dear Deputy Sherlock,

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

Day Services are a key component of support services that enable people to live within the community. The New Directions Policy, which was published in 2013, outlines the manner in which adults with disabilities receive disability day services. This policy is underpinned by the values of person centredness, community inclusion, active citizenship and quality.

This policy is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities which articulate the rights of people with disabilities to avail of the whole range of public services that are available to all citizens of the state. The guiding principle for HSE funded day services is that supports will be tailored to individual need and will be flexible, responsive and person-centred.

In 2025, the HSE is scheduled to provide Day Services to 20,600 individuals with a disability, together with a further 2,049 in RT services. These services are provided at 1,294 locations around the country by 97 service provider agencies.

Day services expand every year to meet the needs of people leaving school or rehabilitative training that are referred to the HSE Day Opportunities teams each year. Although, the delivery of day services was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the table below shows that the HSE has increased the number of Day Service places by 27% since 2019, from 16,245 to 20,600.

Please note that data has not been reported nationally by IHA

|                                                    | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   | 2022   | 2023   | 2024   | 2025   |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| No of People in receipt of Day Services (excl. RT) | 16,245 | 15,090 | 17,734 | 18,423 | 18,963 | 19,524 | 20,600 |



The HSE Day Service Access & Integration Team, in cooperation with local Day Opportunities teams and service provider organisations, review and plan for future demand based on identified need and regional and national data. In 2025 there was a 10% increase in the number of people leaving school referred to the HSE Day Opportunities teams, and a similar increase in demand is indicated for 2026.

Day services expand every year to meet the needs of over 2,000 people leaving school or rehabilitative training that are referred to the HSE Day Opportunities teams each year. In addition to this, approximately 900 people with a disability who are not school leavers and require a day service later in life, are also referred to the HSE each year. They can only access a day service placement as they become vacant.

With regard to the estimated level of need for new disability services in the next five and ten years, annual demography funding is allocated by DCDE to the HSE each year for day service placements to meet the needs of young people leaving school or rehabilitative training.

It is estimated that 1,400 additional places at a minimum cost of €46m will be required to meet the needs of the young people leaving school and RT in 2026.

There is a projected 10% year on year increase in school leaver referrals up to 2031.

In addition to this, approximately 200 additional funded places are required in 2026 to meet the needs of people who are referred for day service supports later in life

## **Residential Places**

The demand for full-time residential placements within designated centres is extremely high and is reflective of the absence of multi-year development funding that has not been in place since 2007/2008.

The Department of Health's 2021 Disability Capacity Review has projected a need for a minimum of an additional 1,900 residential places by 2032 under a minimum projection and an extra 3,900 in order to return to levels of provision prior to the beginning of the 2008 recession.

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.

## **Action Plan for Disability Services 2023-2026**

The Action Plan for Disability Services 2024-2026, sets out a three year programme designed to tackle the deficits highlighted in the *Disability Capacity Review to 2032*, which identified the demand for specialist community-based disability services arising from demographic change, and considerable levels of unmet need. The central projection of the Capacity Review suggests that adults with intellectual disabilities requiring specialist services will increase by a sixth between 2018 and 2032, with fastest growth for young adults (up a third by 2032) and over 55s (up a quarter).

The Action Plan is designed to provide additional funding for developments that will help build capacity within services, so that the benefits of these funding increases will be felt directly by the service user. This will also help the HSE in dealing with some of the key cost-drivers in service delivery, such as high-cost Priority 1 residential placements, giving greater flexibility and control when planning services. While very significant additional funding has been provided to the sector, pay awards in particular across HSE, Section 38s and 39s has absorbed a significant proportion of that additionality.



The headline service improvements which are planned over the 2024-26 period are:

Residential

- Around 900 additional residential care places to tackle unmet needs and ensure supply keeps pace with demographic change;
- 500 new community-based residential care places to replace disability care in large institutional and campus-based settings, with a view to ending that form of provision by 2030;
- Continued expansion of respite services, including alternative residential option

Yours Sincerely,

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