



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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Roselawn House, University Business
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8th September 2025

Deputy Mattie McGrath,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: mattie.mcgrath@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 44451/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality if she will provide a funding scheme for the construction of purpose built residential units for adults with disabilities.

Dear Deputy McGrath,

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

Residential services make up the largest part of the Disability funding disbursed by the HSE – almost 60% of the total budget – and approximately 90 service providers provide residential services to 8,794 individuals throughout the country. The bulk of these are provided by the 50 highest funded agencies (comprising both Section 38 & Section 39 organisations) – some 6,376 places, or 73%. The HSE itself provides 1,077 or 12% of the places. While 1,318 places or 15% are provided by Private-for-Profit agencies. (Most recent data available - end of July 2025 data)

Demand for 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 for a number of years from 2007/2008.

The HSE acknowledges that demographic challenges associated with the increase in the number of people living with a disability, the increase in age and life expectancy and the changing needs of people with a disability have all led to the need for increased residential facilities. In this regard, the HSE continues to work with agencies to explore various ways of responding to this need in line with the budget available.

A significant underlying challenge relates to the latent unmet need for residential and respite care, which exists in our experiencing a high annual demand for Priority 1 residential places to respond to the most urgent cases.

While a number of new emergency residential places have been added to the residential base, which results in a capacity increase, however, it should also be noted that Residential Capacity will also reduce during the year as a result of the loss of places in congregated settings due to deaths, which cannot be re-utilised mentioned previously. In addition, “in-year” capacity (bed) levels will also be impacted negatively as a result of regulatory requirements; that is, where an inspection outcome leads to capacity being reduced.

Each CHO continues to actively manage applications for support from service users with high levels of acuity/safeguarding risks, through lower-cost non-residential interventions such as in-home and Residential Respite, active case-management and inter-agency cooperation.



Future Planning

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). These projections include an average of approximately 90 new residential places that will be needed each year from 2020 to 2032 to accommodate changes in the size and age structure of the disability population.

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

HSE Capital Plan 2025

With regard to a funding scheme for the construction of purpose built residential units for adults with disabilities, the HSE is not aware of such a scheme.

HSE funding for construction comes from its Capital Plan, which allocates investment to government priority projects and improving critical infrastructure. The HSE Capital Plan 2025, funded from the NDP, provides significant public investment in health infrastructure to meet current need, to cater for an estimated population growth of one million people and to respond to the changing demographic profile in Ireland.

The annual Capital Plan is prepared by HSE Capital and Estates in conjunction with operational services, including Disability Services, taking account of contractual commitments, investment priorities and available funding. In 2025, the total investment in healthcare infrastructure, equipment and furnishing of health facilities from all funding sources is €1.357bn. Minister Foley recently announced additional capital allocation from the NDP to disability of €278 million between 2026 and 2030 – an increase of over 250 per cent.



With regard to Disability Services, the Capital plan in 2025 provides €27m to:

- support specialist community-based disability services
- progress the development of a disability specific, multi-annual capital strategy
- increase the disability capital projects pipeline
- continue the transition of people from institutional settings to community-based services in line with the Time to
- Move on from Congregated Settings policy
- Continue engagement with local authorities and approved housing bodies to avail of additional Government funding through the Capital Assistance Scheme
- Enable service delivery by providing accommodation for disability network teams, therapy and day services
- Continue to progress the recruitment of resources, key to the delivery of disability specific initiatives

For more information on the HSE Capital Plan 2025, please see:

<https://about.hse.ie/publications/hse-capital-plan-2025/>

Yours Sincerely,

Tom McGuirk,
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Access and Integration,
Disability Services