



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.

24th September 2025

Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: richard.boydbarrett@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 47486/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality the estimated average cost of one day of respite for a new placement in respite services.

Dear Deputy Boyd Barrett,

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

The HSE and its funded Agencies provide respite care to children and adults with disabilities. Respite can occur in a variety of settings for various lengths of time, depending on the needs of the individual service user and their family or carer, and according to available resources. Respite is not always centre-based and can be provided in a number of ways, e.g. Centre based; In-Home; Home-to-Home; Family Support, etc. As a vital part of the continuum of services for families, respite potentially helps prevent out-of-home full-time residential placements, preserves the family unit, and supports family stability.

The provision of residential respite services has come under increasing pressure in the past number of years due to a number of impacting factors such as:

- an increase in the number of children and adults who are seeking access to respite as a reflection of general population increase;
- increasing levels of complexity across the sector due to better and improved health care;
- an increase in some cases in the age profile of people with a disability resulting in people presenting with “changing needs”;
- a significant number of respite places have been utilised on longer-term basis due to the presenting complexity of the individual with a disability and also due to home circumstances, which prevents availability of the service to other disabled persons who would normally avail of that respite.
- the regulation of service provision as set by HIQA, which requires Service Providers to comply with regulatory standards in order to meet regulation. Standards specify a requirement for personal and appropriate space which impacts on the capacity and Statement of Purpose for a Designated Centre. This has had a direct impact on capacity where respite beds are no longer allowed within a residential setting e.g. vacated by residents who go home at weekends or for holidays, can no longer be used for respite.
- Implementation of the national policy on congregated settings (Time to Move on from Congregated Settings Policy) determines capacity.

Respite is a key priority area for the HSE for people with disabilities and their families and we have seen significant investment in respite services, which has impacted positively on the level of service delivered in successive years.

In 2024, we delivered **160,952 overnights** and **64,162 day only sessions** to around 6,975 people with a disability. A comparison of 2023 and 2024 activity data, shows an increase of 9,351 respite overnights, representing a growth rate of 6.2% and additional Day-Only Sessions of 19,721 and a growth rate of 43.4%.

At the end of July 2025, we delivered **82,609 (adjusted for non return)** overnight sessions and 33,966 (adjusted) day only respite sessions to 7,460 (adjusted) people with disabilities.



Costs

With regard to the estimated average cost of one day of respite for a new placement in respite services, it is difficult to give this information as mentioned above, respite can be provided in a number of ways for example in a respite/residential centre, in the home, in another home/venue.

Additionally, costs will vary depending on the level support that is required for the person with disability (for example - the number of staff required to deliver support/care, any additional pay, premiums, any special equipment or interventions required, length of time required).

However, from estimates done, we can say that the estimated average cost of one day of respite for a new placement in respite services is approximately €2,287 per day.

It is important to note that these are approximate figures as it is not possible to give exact figures.

Yours Sincerely,

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