



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.

16th October 2025

Deputy Matt Carthy,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: matt.carthy@oireachtas.ie

PQ: 52099/25

To ask the Minister for Children; Disability and Equality further to Parliamentary Question No. 1169 of 10 June 2025, the status of the review of the payment charged to disability day service users for closed routes bus/taxi services; when this review will be completed, and if she will ensure that this charge is abolished as per commitment given by the previous Minister of State for Disabilities; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Carthy,

Thank you for your Parliamentary Question referenced above, which has 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.

There are now 19,524 individuals with a disability in receipt of day services, together with a further 2,046 in Rehabilitative Training services. These services are provided at 1,091 locations around the country by 97 service provider agencies.

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. The Day Opportunities teams are currently working with people referred and providers to ensure placements are available from September, in line with the person's support needs and within the funding resources available.

Transport charges

With regard to transport provision to attend Disability Day Services, the provision of transport services is not part of core services within disability services. As a general rule, public transport should be used in all circumstances where it is an option. This is in keeping with the principle of mainstreaming with a clear focus on ensuring persons with a disability have access to the normal range of services and participate in community life as far as possible. It must be noted that in general, many people with a disability are in receipt of disability allowance and are automatically entitled to the Free Travel Pass.

The HSE recognise that public transport options are not always available to many people throughout the country. In acknowledging the need for appropriate accessible transport without which some people would not be able to access day services, the HSE works collaboratively with Day Service providers, the people attending the service and their families to find viable transport solutions. Some service providers have built up their own transport fleet that provides the necessary transport to people attending their services.



Third party contracted transport, which may require a contribution from the person was negotiated in some areas. For example in the CHO 1 area, local transport operators on behalf of the HSE were commissioned with providing bus or taxi services to facilitate people attend their day services, which were not accessible via public transport routes, to assist individuals and their families who had difficulty in accessing day services in rural areas. These are classed as 'Closed Routes'. All day service passengers in these areas were asked to pay a €4 fee on closed HSE transport routes as a contribution to the overall transport costs. Following a review, it is our understanding that people are no longer being charged for this. The HSE supplements over 90% of travel charges for day service users across counties in the CHO 1 area.

In December, 2024 the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth provided sanction for a once-off measure of €3.6 million funding to be used for the upgrade/replacement of transport vehicles in day services.

Building on a similar approach to addressing the issue of ageing vehicles in disability residential and respite services in 2021, this funding was specifically aimed at supporting the provision of vehicles for transport to day services where other transport solutions are not available and where an ageing fleet exists.

Yours Sincerely,

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