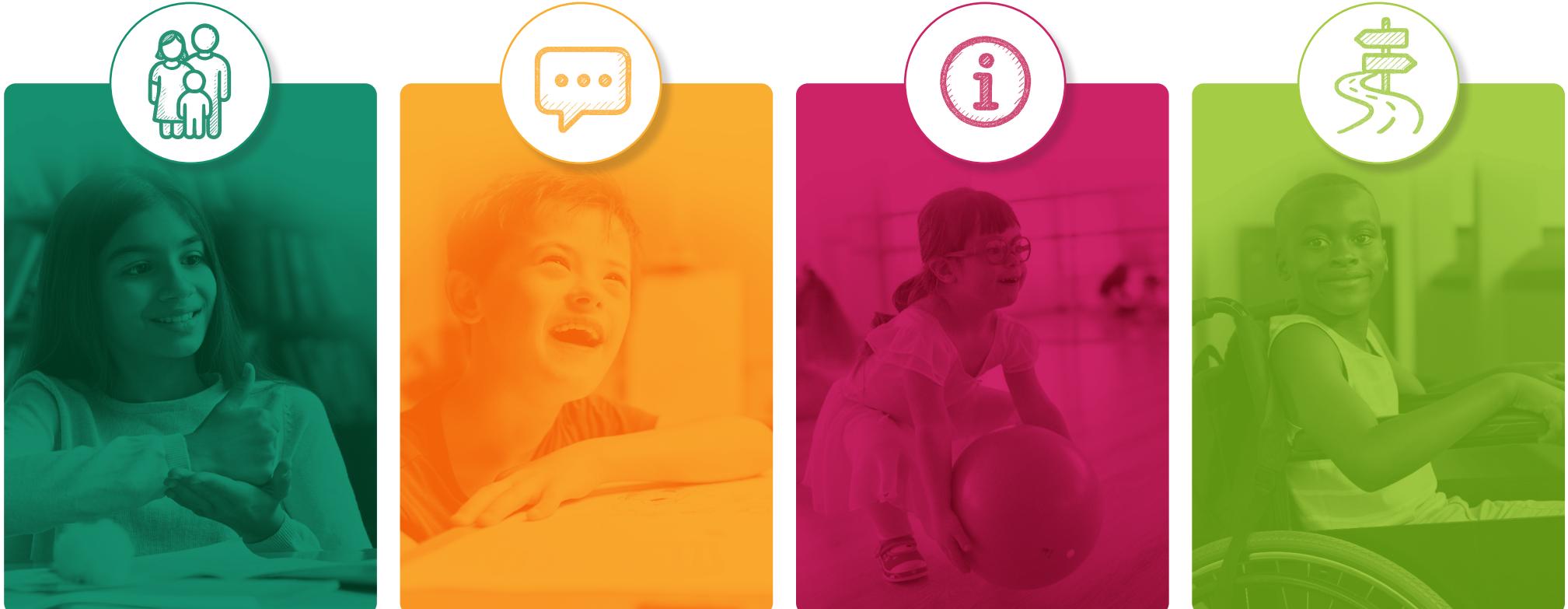




Children's Disability Services

Communications Plan



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Background

The Health Service Executive's (HSE) Children's Disability Services Communications Plan is action 4.2 in the **Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023–2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People**. The Roadmap was designed to drive a substantial service improvement programme for children's disability services. In total, the Roadmap includes 60 actions, all of which are required to achieve the level of service access, quality and improvement that children and families need and that we want to provide.

This document identifies the goals or **objectives** of the HSE's Children's Disability Services Communications Plan. It outlines the **strategy** of how the HSE Children's Disability Services and its Partner Lead Agencies plan to achieve these objectives. The plan details the **activities** that will help us to achieve the objectives, and how we will measure the effectiveness of its implementation.

Our Guiding Principles for Effective Communication

Our communications should:

- ✓ Be easy to understand
- ✓ Be in the right format for the people that we are communicating with
- ✓ Be inclusive
- ✓ Be timely and responsive to need
- ✓ Clearly explain the now and the next

Objectives

- 1 To build trust and confidence in the service provided by Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) by improving communications with our key stakeholder groups.
- 2 To provide families with the information they require at the right time on their journey with Children's Disability Services.
- 3 To increase public knowledge and understanding of children's disability services, and the progress and challenges including retention and recruitment of CDNT staff.

Strategy

- 1 Develop quality assured, clinically approved information and communications for families of children with disabilities that are easy to understand, accessible, timely, transparent and useful at all stages of their engagement with children's disability services.



- 2 Develop a national online resources hub that works as a single point of information for families of children with disabilities while awaiting or receiving health services.



Key Work Programmes – National Children’s Disability Services

Three critical strategic programmes of work underpin the delivery of the HSE Children’s Disability Services Communications Plan:

- 1 Development of **training, support, guidelines and standards** to enable all staff and services to communicate clearly and consistently with families through agreed communications channels.
- 2 Development of **communications material** such as videos, booklets, infographics, templates, and presentations to ensure there is a complete suite of relevant information available to all stakeholders as they need them.
- 3 Development of a **new national online resources hub** for children with disabilities and their families on HSE.ie
 - a. Evidence informed, relevant online resources developed by CDNTs, Primary Care (PC) and others, and new content development as informed by families and staff.
 - b. Content about health, wellbeing and services that is easy to find and easy to understand through HSE.ie.



Delivery of our Communications Plan

The HSE's Children's Disability Services Communications Plan outlines key communications activities for delivery by National, Regional and Local HSE Children's Disability Services and its Partner Lead Agencies.

Several actions from the Communications Plan are already underway as of Q3 2025, such as:

1 The development of a **National Online Resources Hub** that will initially include HSE and Partner Lead Agencies' existing quality assured information for families. The project will extend in 2026 to include new materials based on families' needs.

2 The **revision of key information currently available on HSE.ie** regarding Children's Disability Services. The revisions are based on feedback from parent, Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM) and management representatives.

3 A **national communications lead** has been appointed for Children's Disability Services and will manage the co-ordination and delivery of the plan, ensuring consistency and alignment with a delivery timeline.

In addition:

4 A **Single Point of Access (SPoA)** is being implemented by the HSE for referrals to children's Primary Care, Disability and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This key structural reform is designed to **streamline referrals, reduce duplication, and enhance accessibility** by providing families and professionals with **one consistent entry point** into children's services. It supports early intervention, improved internal communication across services, and strengthened external communications with families.

5 A standardised **Initial CDNT Pathway** has been approved for implementation by the Roadmap's Service Improvement Programme Board and will follow on from the Single Point of Access referral pathway being developed in each region for children's disability services. This Initial Pathway sets out the steps from point of receipt of referral to the CDNT to completion of the Initial Contact intervention to drive consistency across all teams.

6 The rollout out of the CDNT Information Management System is targeted for completion in Q4 2025 and will help streamline processes and standardise CDNT administrative tasks.

Measuring Success

We will measure implementation of the Children's Disability Services Communications Plan and its effectiveness by

- Successful delivery of its actions (see pages 9 to 19)
- Quantitative and qualitative feedback from families, service users and staff
- Usage reporting for online information

Stakeholder Insights

The HSE and its Partner Lead Agencies have a wide range of stakeholders. Our most important stakeholders are people accessing the services and supports we provide - children with disabilities and their families. HSE and HSE funded organisations' staff are our greatest assets. The relationship between the HSE and the voluntary sector is one of interdependence and co-reliance. Supporting collaboration, integration and partnership will have a positive impact on the quality of services and the experience of those accessing services.



Communicating with Stakeholders

The stakeholder mapping grid provides an analysis of the **impact of communications** activity on the individual or group and an assessment of **the influence of that individual or group**.

High Impact/ High Influence	High Impact/ Low Influence	Low Impact/ High Influence	Low Impact/ Low Influence
Stakeholders	Stakeholders	Stakeholders	Stakeholders
CDNT Governance Groups CDNMs Family representatives Section 38 & 39 Agencies Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) Family Advocacy Groups Discipline Managers Heads of Service (Disability, Primary Care, CAMHS) Minister for Children, Disability & Equality Unions Universities and Further Education Institutions	CDNT staff Individual family members Contracted providers (e.g. Assessment of Need (AON) sub-contractors) General Practitioners (GPs), Public Health Nurses (PHNs), Paediatricians, Hospital staff Other children's services staff National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Patient & service user forums Department of Education and Youth Professional Bodies National Education Psychology Services (NEPS)	Advocacy groups & DPOs (Disabled Persons Organisation) Clinical programmes General public Government officials (Health, Education) Hospital groups HSE Board, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Regional Executive Officer (REO) Media Ombudsman for Children Political Representatives (TDs, Ministers) Tusla	CORU HSE Departments (Human resources (HR), Finance, Estates) National Appeals Office Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)
			
Engagement Approach	Engagement Approach	Engagement Approach	Engagement Approach
Key partners Involve closely in planning and decision-making. Prioritise communication and collaboration.	Empower and inform Actively communicate and support; ensure their voices are heard.	Maintain Connection This stakeholder group influences decisions but aren't directly impacted. They should be kept informed and consulted as necessary.	Monitor Minimal engagement needed. Keep informed as appropriate.

Working Together

The HSE and its Partner Lead Agencies are committed to the development and provision of high quality, responsive and timely services to meet the needs of all children with disabilities and their families. There are 93 Children's Disability Network Teams across the country, each covering a specific geographical area and governed by one of the following Lead Agencies:

	PROVIDER TYPE	HSE	NUMBER OF TEAMS	43
	PROVIDER TYPE	S39	NUMBER OF TEAMS	20
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	6
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	5
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	4
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	4
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	3
	PROVIDER TYPE	S39	NUMBER OF TEAMS	2
	PROVIDER TYPE	S39	NUMBER OF TEAMS	2
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	2
	PROVIDER TYPE	S39	NUMBER OF TEAMS	1
	PROVIDER TYPE	S38	NUMBER OF TEAMS	1

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

Stage: Pre-referral to services:

To whom

Parents/carers¹

Referrers including amongst others, Acute Services Paediatricians, PHNs, Primary Care, Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP)

Why: the purpose

Signpost parents and referrers to SPoA process
Reduce parental anxiety
Build trust in the services and organisations providing it
Enhancing Public awareness
Building service and organisation profile

When

Quarter 4 2025 and maintain and update as required

What are we communicating on

Critical

Information about

- Services for children with disabilities from birth, once developmental delay has been identified and after diagnosis
- Paediatric Primary Care services
- Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) Model of services, including assessment and intervention types depending on need
- Needs based, not diagnosis-based services
- How to access the right service – pathway to services
- Referral process and forms
- Link to Disability benefits
- Links to support agencies, helplines

Format

Written including

- Visuals
- Short videos

How (Medium)

HSE.ie
New online resource and information service
Presentations for referrer groups e.g.

- GPs
- PHNs
- Family Resource Centres
- Acute Services
- Community Support Groups

Social media

By whom

National HSE Disabilities Lead via National Children's Disability Services website

Referrers who have CDNT/Primary Care (PC) Information Leaflet

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Implementation of the National CDS Communications Plan:

- Development, ongoing review and maintenance of required materials, templates for use at local, regional and national levels and for delivery of National Communication elements
- National Children's Disability Services website further developed to include information on CDNT referral process explaining pathway to the right service
- Guideline for appropriate use of social media when communicating with families and community partners about the service

¹ In this Communication Plan, all references to parents refers to parents and guardians.

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

Stage: Once referred to CDNT services from the Single Point of Access



To whom

Individual Parents



What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Update parents on:
 - The referral has been received by the CDNT
 - Estimated waitlist times
 - Welcome pack with information on -
 - CDNT services and contact details
 - Other relevant services and supports
 - Links to entitlements
 - Family forums
 - Glossary of terms and acronyms
2. Follow up phone call five weeks after sending the welcome pack to:
 - Confirm that the family received the welcome Pack
 - Help them understand the CDNT model and clarify any issues or queries they may have
 - Signpost to any universal or on-line supports that may be of assistance

Desirable

3. Face to face new parent group information sessions



Why: the purpose

Inform parents of the new service and options for alternate services if they wish.

Reduce parent anxiety in relation to navigating a new service.

Support parents to navigate the journey of ensuring their child's needs are met.

Build trusting relationships with families



When

1. Within two weeks of receipt of referral
2. Within five weeks of issue of letter and welcome pack
3. Quarterly



By whom

1. CDNM/admin
2. CDNM/team member
3. CDNM and members of the team



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

1. Standardised headings to be covered in all CDNT welcome packs including support structures e.g. family resource centres, parent support groups, national advocacy groups
2. Standardised letter templates
3. National CDNT information leaflet template for local CDNT specifics to be added

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

Stage: In preparation for the Initial Contact meeting

To whom

Individual Parents

What are we communicating on

Critical

- Appointment for Initial Contact Meeting with members of the team
- Information on what an Initial Contact Meeting is, what an Individual Family Support Plan is, setting goals, roles of parents and staff in supporting the child towards achieving their goals
- Expectations of the service and of parents in a CDNT.

Why: the purpose

Developing an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP)

Progressing parents understanding of child & family centred service model

Developing strategies with parents for implementing

Building trust and collaborative working

When

Once decision made to open the referral to team service

By whom

CDNM/admin

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

- Guide to Communicating effectively with children and families
- Regional Training Workshops on implementing the Guide in all CDNTs

How (Medium)

Email

Hard copy in post

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local



To whom

Children and Young People



What are we communicating on

Critical

Information on the service they will be accessing.



Why: the purpose

Reduce anxiety attending new services

Inform about the services, staff working in them, how services work, to help them achieve their goals

Build trust



Format

Age appropriate

1. Videos of a child & of a teenager accessing CDNT services
2. Social story relevant to clinic space and CDNT
3. Laminate pictures of buildings, rooms, clinicians in Child Friendly Welcome Pack



When

As required



By whom

CDNM and team



How (Medium)

- Email
- In person orientation visit to their CDNT



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

To be developed nationally for CDNT use

- Videos of a child / teenager accessing a CDNT (Social Stories)
- Social story template
- Child friendly version of the Welcome Pack

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Family representatives (elected by their Family Forums)

What are we communicating on

Critical

Updates on:

1. Issues and recommendations made by the Family Forum and raised by family reps at CDNT/Operational Management Group/CDNT Governance Group level, and outcome of same
2. CDNT staffing levels, recruitment & waitlist
3. Progress of Roadmap actions, in particular recruitment and access to services and waiting list initiatives, ongoing challenges and activities in place to address them

Why: the purpose

1. To give feedback on issues and recommendations raised at the Family Forum and the outcome of this.
2. To provide reps with the information needed to relay to families at the Family Forum
3. To inform families of the

Format

Written
Verbal

How (Medium)

Email
Online Meeting

When

In advance of Family Forums

By whom

Family Representative Group (FRG) reps on the Governance Group

Family reps on the Operational Management Group (OMG) if different

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Template for national sharing of quarterly updates with CDNTs collated from Roadmap Working Groups, and other National Children's Disability Services Improvement initiatives

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Family Forum

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Deliverables from last Family Forum
2. Waitlist times for CDNT services
3. Staffing levels / Progress on recruitment and ongoing national, regional and Lead Agencies activities to optimise filling of vacancies
4. Local resources / Family Support Groups
5. Available resources for those waitlisted (including HSE and HSE funded online resources and courses run by CDNTs).
6. Contact information for the CDNT
7. National Online Resources Platform
8. CDNT Model of Service – child and family centric model
9. The role of the Family Rep - limitations/ expectations.
10. National Advocacy Organisations.

Why: the purpose

To keep parents informed about their likely wait time and the likely type of service available once a child becomes "Open" on caseload.

To highlight the supports that are available

To manage parents' expectations

Format

Link to pack of information in advance of the Family Forum

Social media posts

How (Medium)

In person

Offer hybrid approach to optimise participation.

When

Quarterly

By whom

CDNM

Supported by some CDNT staff, management and facilitator

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Clinicians' time

Nationally standardised template to guide CDNMs on what should be covered in the Forum and what should be circulated in advance

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

>To whom

Public Representatives

Why: the purpose

To ensure formal feedback is given at a political level on the model of service, highlighting current wait times and staffing/recruitment challenges.

When

As required
Proactively seek opportunities

What are we communicating on

Critical

- Current service provision for children and families
- Service demand
- Waiting times
- Recruitment initiatives and outcomes, ongoing challenges
- Evidence informed CDNT child and family centred model of service, and its dependencies

Format

Formal/In writing

How (Medium)

Written responses to reps
Presentation to local and regional forums

By whom

CDNM /General Manager/Head of Service/Lead Agency

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Training for relevant Lead Agency staff in responding to Parliamentary Questions (PQ), Public Representative etc queries on CDNT services – recorded for new recruits.

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Media

What are we communicating on

Desirable

Proactively seek opportunities to showcase and promote good, innovative CDNT practices, and outcomes achieved for children and their families across the country

Why: the purpose

Building

To promote service delivery in communities specifically new services or service changes

To inform communities of services available

Format

1. Written
2. Spoken - interview

How (Medium)

1. Paper article
2. Interview

When

As required

By whom

CDNM, Primary Care Manager, Regional and National Communications Team

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

None

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

CDNT Staff /CDNMs

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Update on

- Health Region/Lead Agency recruitment and retention updates, Roadmap actions and Service Improvement initiatives, challenges and activities in train to address
- Developing understanding of the community around the CDNT, other voluntary and community resources outside of the team available for families, support groups, parent groups, family resource centres, schools, inclusive clubs etc

2. Roadmap reports monthly report

Why: the purpose

Effectively deliver clinical service to children and families

Support and empower staff to deliver services locally

Support families navigating services across disciplines

When

Quarterly

By whom

Lead Agency - senior level management

CDNM

Format

Post induction and access to National Team Development Programme resources:

1. Regional Newsletter & Information sessions
2. Reports accessible online



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Nationally standardised induction presentation to be developed for local and Lead Agency adaptation.

How (Medium)

Email

Children's Disability Services website

In person

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Family Support Groups & Local Community Partners e.g. family resource centres

What are we communicating on

1. How to refer to the service
2. What the service requires for referral
3. Information for families on how to contact the CDNT and follow up on appointment
4. Information on the CDNT child and family centred model of service

Why: the purpose

Ensure efficient and effective pathways from one service to another
Avoid delay in referrals being received by having the correct clinical information
Ensure families are fully informed of services being referred to.

When

As required

By whom

CDNM with Regional Comms support on social media elements

Format

Written

- Children's Disability Services website
- Nationally standardised CDNT Information Leaflet

How (Medium)

Email (information leaflets and links to online information)
Online (Children's Disability Services website)
In person presentations by CDNMs
Social media tagging various community groups and partners with videos and website links



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Nationally standardised CDNT Leaflet
Development of National Children's Disability Services website to include all of this including visual pathways for access to services for children with disabilities (Primary Care and CDNT)

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Primary Referrers

e.g. GPs, PHNs

Acute Consultants

Paediatricians

Why: the purpose

Ensure efficient and effective pathways from one service to another

Avoid delay in referrals being accepted to service by having the correct clinical information

Ensure families are fully informed of services being referred to

When

As required. Yearly update to manage new staff and staff changes

By whom

CDNMs /Primary Care supported by Regional Comms

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. How to refer to the service
2. What the service requires for referral
3. Information for families on how to contact the CDNT and follow up on appointment

Format

Written

- Including nationally standardised CDNT information leaflet

Verbal

- Education sessions for referrers including GPs, PHNs



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Presentation Template

Nationally standardised CDNT Leaflet with space for local details

How (Medium)

- Email
- In person presentations
- Children's Disability Services website

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Contracted Staff

What are we communicating on

1. Assigned accountable individual within HSE/ Lead Agency structures for oversight and management of the Contracted Services
2. Referral pathways to and from their services.
3. Available services for families following on from intervention / assessment
4. Required Contracted Services monthly metrics in line with CDNT template as relevant and evaluation programme
5. Clear outline of the expectation from the hiring service of what is expected.

Why: the purpose

Ensure safe, effective quality services are delivered to children and families.

Have a clear reporting mechanism to the organisation to ensure best practice services are delivered and families and children are receiving a good quality of service.

Regular review of metric returns and evaluations will enhance clarity, governance and quality of service provision by private contractors.

When

As required and commensurate with level of service contracted.

By whom

Disability Managers CDNMs, Primary Care Management

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Lead Agency

- Induction pack
- Presentation

How (Medium)

1-5.
Induction with Lead Agency at beginning of contract

Information and review session, commensurate with level of service contracted

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Schools/Preschools

What are we communicating on

Critical

- CDNT and Primary Care services and which service to refer to (in line with National Access Policy)
- CDNT model of service and how CDNTs deliver services
- CDNT role with schools
- Staffing levels, wait times and expectations of service.

Why: the purpose

To inform schools
To build collaborative working relationships and open dialogue with schools/ preschools.

Format

Written
Verbal (phone and in person)

How (Medium)

1. Education/ awareness sessions with school within Networks
2. Continuous open dialogue with schools via phone /email/ letter
3. Social media - tagging schools and sharing links to websites

When

Every 1-2 years for education /awareness sessions with local schools
CDNTs continuously link in with schools/ preschools on a regular formal basis

By whom

CDNM, PDS lead, Primary Care Manager jointly delivered sessions
Regional Comms support on social media activities

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Nationally standardised PowerPoint
Education template for RHA / CDNT customisation
Guidelines for appropriate use of social media to communicate with community partners

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Local

To whom

Primary Care HSCPs

What are we communicating on

1. How to refer to the service
2. What the service requires for referral
3. Information for families on how to contact the CDNT and follow up on appointment.
4. Interteam networking. CDNT meeting and interacting with colleagues in both Primary Care and CDNT.
5. Interteam working model

Why: the purpose

Ensure efficient and effective pathways from one service to another

Avoid delay in referrals being accepted to service by having the correct clinical information

Ensure families are fully informed of the services being referred to.

Interteam working allows the service to support families from one service to another seamlessly

When

As required.

Yearly update to manage new staff and staff changes

By whom

CDNMs/Primary Care

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Format

Leaflets and written information

Education sessions for referrers and members on the Primary Care Team (PCT)

Networking events for primary care and CDNT staff

How (Medium)

Email

In person

Children's Disability Services website

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

FRGs

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Quarterly Roadmap Progress Report
2. Regional info on W/Ls and numbers attending
3. Regional policy decisions

Why: the purpose

Keep the FRG fully informed
Provide transparent, factual information, including progress on Roadmap Actions and the challenges, to support ongoing development of codesign practice
Identify challenges and progress
Collaboration

When

In line with FRG meetings and as issues arise

By whom

Head of Service/Chair of Governance Group

Format

Written
Verbal

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Admin support from CDNTs where existing and adequate

How (Medium)

Email
Governance Group Meeting Notes
Published metric reports
Infographics

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

CDNT Governance Group

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Monthly CDNT metrics and special schools' data – RHA collated return
2. Roadmap Actions under Regional/ CDNT Governance Group / Lead Agency responsibility to deliver
3. Regional issues
4. Emerging trends
5. Policy updates

Why: the purpose

Seek insights into teams' performances and opportunities to share good practices across teams and Lead Agencies, driving optimal service effectiveness and efficiencies across all teams.

Track progress of Roadmap actions under Regional responsibility to deliver

Keep up to date with regional policies, emerging issues and population trends to plan

Format

- Written
- Verbal
- Face to Face

How (Medium)

- Email
- Circulation of new policies and reports

When

In line with Governance Group meetings and as issues arise

By whom

Heads of Service Disabilities (HOSD) / Disability Lead
Lead Agencies CEOs
CDNM rep
Discipline Manager rep

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

OMG - CDNMs

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Current Monthly CDNT metrics and special schools' data – RHA collated return
2. Regional policy changes
3. Topics raised by FFs
4. Clinical Advisory Group activities
5. Discipline Managers activities

Why: the purpose

- Inform decisions
- Identify trends & opportunities for spread of good practices to optimise team efficiencies and effectiveness
- Support and share
- Mitigate risk

Format

- Written
- Verbal
- CDNT metrics
- Reports
- Memo
- Policy docs
- Presentations

How (Medium)

- Email
- CDNM space on MS Teams/Sharepoint or other platform
- Webinars

When

1. Monthly
- 2-5. In line with OMG meetings and as issues arise

By whom

1. HOSD
2. CDNMs Rep on Governance Group
3. FRG reps
4. Clinical Advisory Group (CAG)
5. Discipline Manager rep

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Admin support from CDNTs where existing and adequate

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

Q To whom

Clinical Advisory Group (CAG)

★ Why: the purpose

Ensure CAG is addressing current issues
Reduce risk levels
Consistency across regions

⌚ When

Regular updates in line with CAG and OMG Meetings and as issues arise

❓ What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Two-way communication on clinical issues arising in CDNTs

★ Format

Written
Verbal
Face to Face

👤 By whom

- CAG Chair
- Operational Management Group (CDNMs)
- CDNT Governance Group

☒ How (Medium)

Email
OMG meetings
Updates to/from CAG
Chair on clinical issues



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Admin support from CDNTs where existing and adequate

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

Education i.e. school principals, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO)

Why: the purpose

Support collaboration and joint working
Planning for future needs for services

When

Quarterly updates and as issues arise

What are we communicating on

Critical

Regional issues, policy updates and emerging trends

Format

Written
Verbal
Face to Face

By whom

Operational Management Group

How (Medium)

Email
Reports and policies
Relevant information from metrics
Social media

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Admin support from CDNTs where existing and adequate

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

🔍 To whom

Trade Unions

⭐ Format

Written
Verbal
Face to Face

👤 By whom

HOSD
Lead and Partner Agencies
Human Resources

❓ What are we communicating on

Critical

Two-way communication with staff members on regional issues experienced

✖️ How (Medium)

Email
Meetings with Regional Union Reps

📚 Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

⭐ Why: the purpose

Listen to staff and provide support
Raise morale
Ensure information is high quality and correct/factual.
Create a culture of consultation, transparency and trust
Provide consistency
Inform ongoing work regionally to avoid duplication

🕒 When

As required

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

**Disability services
(including Adults and Respite)**

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Emerging trends

Desirable

2. Regional issues in children's services

Why: the purpose

Planning for transitions and future need for adult services
Develop wider understanding of model and level of service

Format

Written
Verbal
Face to Face

How (Medium)

Email
Reports
CDNT metrics
Meetings

When

Quarterly updates and as issues arise

By whom

Heads of Service Disabilities / Disability Lead
Lead Agencies CEOs
Operational Management Group (CDNMs and Children's Services Managers)
CDNT Governance Group

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Admin support from CDNTs where existing and adequate

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

🔍 To whom

Primary Care, GPs, PHNs, CAMHS, Hospital Groups, other potential referrers

❓ What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Regional issues, policy updates and emerging trends
2. Info on CDNT model AON and rationale for service delivery and updates
3. Where CDNTs are located and how to refer

⭐ Why: the purpose

Support working relationships, collaboration and joint working
Planning for future needs for services
Develop wider understanding of the CDNT model
Sharing of accurate information
Ensuring appropriate referral pathways for children and families

🕒 When

Regular updates and as issues arise

👤 By whom

Heads of Service Disabilities / Disability Lead
Operational Management Group (CDNMs & Children's Services Managers)

⭐ Format

Written
Verbal
Face to Face



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

✖ How (Medium)

Email
Regional Webinars recorded and link circulated

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – Regional

>To whom

Media

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Responses to specific issues
2. Explanation for challenges in meeting targets
3. Info on CDNT model, AON and rationale for service delivery
4. Positive stories from families and CDNTs

Why: the purpose

- Develop wider understanding of model
- Proactive information sharing
- Accurate information
- Responses to issues in the media
- Transparency and accountability for public funding
- Improve morale and public opinion

Format

- Written
- Verbal
- Face to Face

How (Medium)

- Formal response via appropriate channel as per appropriate comm policy
- Email
- Social media

When

- On receiving journalists' requests
- Proactive submission of articles

By whom

- National Childrens Disability Services Team
- Heads of Service Disabilities / Disability Lead
- Lead Agency CEOs

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

- Support from RHA Communications staff
- National repository of descriptions of CDNT model, AON

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Families and FRGs

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Roadmap Report and customised cover letter with explanatory background & relevance to this group
2. National collated CDNT Metrics
3. National standardised information on the CDNT Model and pathway to and through services
4. CDNT Story with link to new online information service once in place

Why: the purpose

Being accountable to families

Informing

Enabling them to make informed decisions

Building trust

Opportunity to feed back

Format

Report in Word and Excel – National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) proofed

Easy Read version.

Infographics

Visual graphics

Video explaining CDNT Model, challenges, Roadmap objectives

How (Medium)

Children's Disability Services website

QR/Link to be included in FF invites for parents to access the report

Instagram

Facebook

LinkedIn

Webinar on progress of Roadmap implementation with opportunity for families to raise questions

When

1. Quarterly
2. Quarterly
3. Biannual webinar

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead
CDNMs

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

National materials to enable Comms Plan implementation:

- National Repository of descriptions of CDNT service model, visuals, templates for monthly report and infographics, customised letter templates for each stakeholder group, PowerPoint templates
- Standardised templates for Health Regions, Lead Agencies, CDNTs
- Updates for Children's Disability Services website
- Guide on How to Communicate with families in ways that are respectful and easily understood

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Staff/CDNMs
Heads of Service
Lead Agencies CEOs
PDS Leads
National Clinical Programme for People with Disabilities
Discipline Managers

What are we communicating on

1. Roadmap Report and customised cover letter relevant to this group
2. National collated CDNT Metrics
3. Topics arising from National Policies, Standards, Audits and reviews
4. Annual review of Roadmap progress

Why: the purpose

Accountability
Opportunity to feed into Roadmap WGs/SIPB through their reps
Staff feeling valued/heard
Staff morale, retention, recruitment
Informing team practice, service development, quality and safety

Format

1. and 2.
Written
Infographics
Webinar for CDNMs on how they should use this info e.g. OMG review
3. Reports on policy reviews, audits
Webinars on National standards/
Periodic round table events on policy and practice
4. Biannual webinar for CDNT staff on progress of Roadmap

How (Medium)

- 1 and 2.
 - Email with link to website
 - MS Teams/ Sharepoint or other platform for CDNT Staff and for CDNMs
 - Quarterly newsletter showcasing innovative teams' practices and families' experiences
3. Email
4. Webinar

When

- 1-2. Quarterly
3. As need identified
4. Biannual

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

National materials to enable Comms Plan implementation:

- National Repository of descriptions of CDNT service model, visuals, templates for monthly report and infographics, customized letter templates for each stakeholder group, PowerPoint templates
- Standardised templates for Health Regions, Lead Agencies, CDNTs
- Updates for Children's Disability Services website
- Guide on How to Communicate with families in ways that are respectful and easily understood
- Cover letter template customised for this group

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

HSE CEO
HSE Board

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Roadmap Report
2. National collated CDNT Metrics
3. Topics on request from CEO/Board/ Subcommittee

Why: the purpose

Accountability
Governance
Assurance

Format

- 1 & 2. Written with customised cover letter for this group Infographics
3. PPT as required

How (Medium)

Email

When

- 1 & 2. Quarterly
3. As required

By whom

Assistant National Director & National Service Improvement Lead, Children's Disability Services.



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

National materials to enable Comms Plan implementation:

- National Repository of descriptions of CDNT service model, visuals, templates for monthly report and infographics, customised letter templates for each stakeholder group, PowerPoint templates
- Standardised templates for Health Regions, Lead Agencies, CDNTs
- Updates for Children's Disability Services website
- Guide on How to Communicate with families in ways that are respectful and easily understood
- Cover letter template customised for this group

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Regional Executive Officers (REO)
National Leads Primary Care & CAMHS

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Roadmap Report
2. Topics arising from Roadmap Working Groups, National Policies, Standards, Audits and reviews etc

Why: the purpose

Informing
Influencing
Building trust

Format

1. Customised letter relevant to this group with link to Children's Disability Services website for full report
2. Infographics

How (Medium)

Email

When

1. Quarterly
2. As required

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

National materials to enable Comms Plan implementation:

- National Repository of descriptions of CDNT service model, visuals, templates for monthly report and infographics, customised letter templates for each stakeholder group, PowerPoint templates
- Standardised templates for Health Regions, Lead Agencies, CDNTs
- Updates for Children's Disability Services website
- Guide on How to Communicate with families in ways that are respectful and easily understood
- Cover letter template customised for this group

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

DCDE
Minister
Minister of State
Oversight Group
Ombudsman for children

Why: the purpose

Accountability

When

1-4. Quarterly
5-6. As required

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Roadmap Report and customised cover letter relevant to this group
2. National collated CDNT Metrics
3. AON
4. Special Schools
5. Other Topics on request
6. Oireachtas Committee reports and attendances

How (Medium)

1-6.
Email
Meetings
Presentations

By whom

Assistant National Director & National Service Improvement Lead, Children's Disability Services

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Cover letter template customised for this group

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Unions
Professional bodies
Advocacy groups and Disabled persons orgs

Format

1. Word/excel
2. Updates on other

By whom

Assistant National Director & National Service Improvement Lead, Children's Disability Services

What are we communicating on

Critical

1. Roadmap Report and customised cover letter relevant to these groups
2. National works outside of the Roadmap

How (Medium)

1. Email
2. Meetings



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Cover letter template customised for this group

When

1. Quarterly
2. As required & currently monthly with FORSA

Why: the purpose

Informing
Influencing
Building trust
Collaboration Stakeholder engagement and input

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

NCSE
Department of Education and Youth
NEPS

Format

Word / excel
Presentations
Infographics

By whom

Assistant National Director & National Service Improvement Lead, Children's Disability Services

What are we communicating on

Critical

- Roadmap
- Special Schools - posts recruited and therapy hours delivered onsite
- AON: demand, source of demand, provision
- Topical items

How (Medium)

Email
Meetings

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Cover letter template customised for this group

When

Quarterly
And
As required

Why: the purpose

Engage

Intersectoral, integrated work to optimise outcomes for children with disabilities

Implementation of Children’s Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Higher Education Institutes (HEI)

What are we communicating on

Critical

- CDNT Model of Service
- Roadmap summary progress report
- Student Placements provided per discipline per CDNT provided per academic year and target per academic year

Why: the purpose

Increase student training places across all disciplines

Build sustainable student placement programme

Format

- Meeting Notes
 - CDNT Metrics - HR
- Annual Student Placements per discipline per team that were provided
- Target for each discipline per CDNT for each academic year
- Student sponsorship programme

How (Medium)

Email
HSE/HEIs Forum

When

Quarterly HSE HEIs Forum

In advance of each “Open Day” season (Jan/Feb)

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead and National Clinical Programme for People with Disabilities (NCPD) lead

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Cover letter template customised for this group

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Other Government Departments
e.g. Health/ Other Ministers/TDs and Senators

Format

Infographics
Word/excel
Verbal

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead

What are we communicating on

Desirable

- Letter relevant to this group with link to Children's Disability Services website for Roadmap Report
- Information on the CDNT service model
- PQs, Leaders Questions
- FOI (Freedom of Information)

How (Medium)

Email
In person/online meetings



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Letter template customised for this group

When

Report quarterly
Meetings as required

Why: the purpose

Informing
Building awareness
Reduce demand for additional information

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

Oireachtas Committees

Format

Word/excel
Infographics
Verbal

By whom

Assistant National Director & National Service Improvement Lead, Children's Disability Services

What are we communicating on

Required

On request, children's disability services and Roadmap progress, challenges, targets

How (Medium)

Emails
In person meetings

Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Why: the purpose

Accountability
Informing
Influencing

When

On request

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National



To whom

HSE departments e.g. Finance, Estates.



Format

Word/excel



By whom

National Service Improvement Lead



What are we communicating on

Desirable

Letter relevant to this group with link to Children's Disability Services website for Roadmap Report



How (Medium)

Email



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Letter template customised for this group



Why: the purpose

Keep informed



When

As required

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National



To whom

Media



Format

Word

Excel



By whom

National Service Improvement Lead



What are we communicating on

Critical

CDNT service stories

Roadmap milestones achieved

CDNT staff stories



How (Medium)

Emails

Seek interview

Link recordings on Children's Disability Services website



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)



Why: the purpose

Build positive image of CDNT service

Promote traction strategy as good place to work

Balance negative media



When

As required

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National



To whom

Tusla



Format

Word



By whom

National Service Improvement Lead



What are we communicating on

Desirable

Letter relevant to this group with link to Children's Disability Services website for Roadmap Report



How (Medium)

Email



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Letter template customised for this group



Why: the purpose

Keep informed



When

Quarter

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National

To whom

CORU (regulatory body of health and social care professionals)

NMBI

Format

Letter

By whom

National Service Improvement Lead

What are we communicating on

Desirable

Letter relevant to this group with link to Children's Disability Services website for Roadmap Report

How (Medium)

Email



Resources required additional to existing Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)

Letter template customised for this group

When

Annually

Why: the purpose

Keep informed

Implementation of Children's Disability Services Communications Plan – National



To whom

General public



Format



By whom



What are we communicating on

Important

Informed through media stories



How (Medium)



Resources required additional to existing
Comms (staff, templates, guidance etc)



Why: the purpose



When

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AON	Assessment of Need	IFSP	Individual Family Support Plan
CAG	Clinical Advisory Group	HSE	Health Service Executive
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
CDNT	Children's Disability Network Team	NCPPD	National Clinical Programme for People with Disability
CDNM	Children's Disability Network Manager	NCSE	National Council for Special Education
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
CORU	Regulatory body for Health and Social Care Professionals	NMBI	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
DCDE	Department of Children, Disability and Equality	OMG	Operational Management Group
DPO	Disabled Persons Organisation	PC	Primary Care
FOI	Freedom of Information	PCT	Primary Care Team
FRG	Family Representative Group	PDS	Progressing Disability Services programme
GM	General Manager	PHN	Public Health Nurse
GP	General Practitioner	PQ	Parliamentary Question
HEI	Higher Education Institution	REO	Regional Executive Officer
HOSD	Head of Service Disabilities	SENO	Special Educational Needs Organiser
HR	Human Resources	SPoA	Single Point of Access
HSCP	Health and Social Care Professional		

HSE

