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Deireadh Fómhair 2022

Joint Committee on Disability Matters

Joint Committee on Disability Matters
Visit To Children's Disability Network Team

October 2022

Membership

- Holly Cairns T.D., Social Democrats
- Seán Canney T.D., Independent
- Emer Higgins T.D., Fine Gael
- Neasa Hourigan T.D., Green Party
- Michael Moynihan T.D., Fianna Fáil, (Cathaoirleach)
- Jennifer Murnane O'Connor T.D., Fianna Fáil
- John Paul Phelan T.D., Fine Gael
- Pauline Tully T.D., Sinn Féin, (Leas-Chathaoirleach)
- Violet – Anne Wynne T.D., Sinn Féin
- Senator Alice Mary Higgins, Independent
- Senator Erin McGreehan, Fianna Fáil
- Senator Fiona O'Loughlin, Fianna Fáil
- Senator Mary Seery Kearney, Fine Gael

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T.D., *Fine Gael*



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Violet – Anne Wynne
T.D.,
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Senator Alice Mary
Higgins, *Independent*



Senator Erin
McGreehan
Fianna Fáil



Senator Fiona
O'Loughlin,
Fianna Fáil



Senator Mary Seery
Kearney,
Fine Gael

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Introduction

1. The role of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters (the Committee) is to monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Committee's Work Programme 2020/2021 was developed in line with the emerging themes from the UNCRPD.
2. Under the theme 'Health and life', the Committee heard directly from people with disabilities, families, and Disabled Persons Organisations regarding their experience of the HSE Progressing Disabilities Services Model. At the Joint Committee on Disability Matters public meeting, 13 May 2021, the HSE extended an invitation to the Committee to visit a Children's Network Disability Team (CNDT). In the follow up information from the HSE, the invitation to visit a CNDT was re-iterated.

Children's Network Disability Team (CNDT)

3. CNDT's are being established to provide services and supports for all children with complex needs within a defined geographic area by the HSE. CDNTs are teams of health and social care professionals, including occupational therapy, psychology, nursing, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, social work, and others. The CNDT will work closely together in a family centred model, focussing on the child's and family's own priorities. Once all teams are in place, every child with complex needs will have access to a team, regardless of the nature of their disability, where they live, or the school they attend.
4. The Joint Committee are committed to undertaking this visit at this time to gather information on the progress of the rollout of the CNDT and to gain a practical / operational insight into how the model works.

Committee Delegation

5. The visit to the Summerhill Primary Care Centre, Dublin 1 was attended by the following members of the Committee:
 - Senator Erin McGrehan
 - Senator Mary Seery Kearney
6. The delegation was accompanied by one member of staff from the Committee Secretariate.

Briefing from the HSE

7. The Committee met with the following representatives from the HSE:

Laura O'Connell, Children's Disability Network Manager

Maebh Reynolds, Children's Services Lead CHO Dublin North City & County

Olive Hanley, Head of Service Disability CHO Dublin North City & County

Angela O'Neill, National Disability Specialist

PDS Progress in Dublin North City & County

8. There are 12 Children's Disability Network Teams in Dublin North City and County (DNCC). There is one for each Community Health Network. The Lead Agencies in DNCC are

Central Remedial Clinic: Balbriggan, Swords and Clontarf

Daughters of Charity: Blakestown, Blanchardstown and Cabra Grangegorman

St Michael's House: Coastal, Coolock, Kilbarrack and Ballymun

HSE: Finglas and North Inner City.

All the staff working on the teams are employed by these Lead Agencies.

The following are some of the challenges faced by the CDNT in DNCC:

Challenges	Solutions
The immediate challenge is to manage parent expectation whilst the teams become familiar with their new caseload and analyse the support needs of both open and waitlisted children. There are over 2,500 children on the waiting lists across the 12 teams.	The 12 Children's Disability Network Managers (CDNMs) are working together to develop a plan for engagement with children who are on waiting lists. The plan will include targets for contacting all families on the waiting list to identify their priorities and to ensure that pathways that are developed align to these needs. The plan will include a CHO-wide approach for certain interventions to maximise use of the staff resource. The CDNMs are also looking at developing a range of resources that may be accessed by families remotely so that they can be directed to them following advice clinics.
Staff recruitment: There are approximately 75 vacancies across the CDNTs and very significant competition to fill posts and recruiting at a time that there are also many new posts in Primary Care.	The CDNT are reviewing skill mix and competencies required on the team and considering what other disciplines may be able to fulfil these requirements. As such consideration of nursing and social care posts for certain teams may alleviate pressure on therapists, social work, and psychology. This is signalled to the Human Resources Department and have requested that available posts are advertised on overseas platforms where appropriate.

Accommodation: The vision for CDNTs is that they are situated within a local Community Health Network. In DNCC there were several Networks that did not have accommodation pre-reconfiguration. Capacity in some Primary Care Centres is stretched and particularly as they also try to accommodate Enhanced Community Care posts.

The CDNT Governance Group established an Infrastructure Sub-Group to review accommodation for the new CDNTs, identify priorities (traffic light) and prepare an Accommodation Register that may be used in planning for next 5 years.

New Criteria for CDNTs and Primary Care Services

The new teams are operating to the National Policy on Access for Children and Young People with Disabilities and Developmental Delay. There is a need to increase awareness and understanding with referrers when to make a referral to Primary Care and when to refer to a CDNT. There is also a need for alignment between Disability and Primary Care services so that every referral "lands".

Senior Management in DNCC is driving the roll out of the National Policy on Access. Phase 1 is looking at how to manage new referrals. Primary Care are scoping what the new needs for their service will be and what training and resources they may need to respond to these needs. The CDNMs are running information sessions with Referrers, particularly Primary Care staff, GPs, and Schools.

Waitlists transferred to the CDNTs:

approximately 3,000 children were transferred to the waiting lists for the CDNTs in Dublin North City and County with some families waiting for more than 5 years for a service.

The CDN Managers have developed a coordinated approach to managing the waiting list to ensure a consistent approach across the CHO. This includes incremental approach to addressing waiting lists with initial priority for

- Children under one year
- Children 17+ who require support to transition to adult services
- Children waiting over 3 years

The CDN Managers are contacting these families to identify immediate priorities and are providing range of response based on identified need. This may include:

- Individual assessment/intervention if prioritised under the National Prioritisation Policy
- Advice Clinics/Group interventions

9. The Team highlighted the unique challenge for the North East Inner City where 26% of the population are described as disadvantaged or very disadvantaged and 19% are considered marginally below average. At the extreme end, there are small areas of the North East Inner City contacting 80% lone parent households where up to half of the population have attained primary education only and less than 5% with third level education according to the Mulvey Report (2017). The 2011 census also highlighted significantly higher rates of non-nationals living in the North East Inner City compared to the national average.
10. The Team are necessitated to use a trauma informed approach in their work and are strongly linked to local community projects including Young People at risk in Inner City (YPAR). However, the Team benefit from the links to a large range of community supports operating in the area.
11. A major challenge for the Team has been family attendance and thus the National Policy for CDNT's on family engagement and attendance (2021) is to the fore front in the Team's decision making and activity.
12. The Team highlighted that parents and guardians may not be aware that the new model allows for self-referral and acknowledges that the HSE need to address the promotion of the model as it is perceived as another excuse by the public for not being able to access services.

Conclusion

13. The Committee wish to thank the staff of the CDNT team in Summerhill for the informative presentation and engaging discussion. The Committee will continue to explore this further under its Work Programme.

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Orders of Reference - Dáil Éireann

- (1) That a Select Committee consisting of 9 Members be appointed by Dáil Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.
- (2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-
- (a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-
 - (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
 - (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;
 - (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
 - (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
 - (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
 - (vi) supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland's economy, society, and culture;
 - (vii) reviewing Ireland's Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee;
 - (viii) monitoring and ensuring the timely implementation of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD;

(b) the effectiveness of-

- (i) all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD;
- (ii) the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) the Committee shall-

- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
- (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
- (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.

(4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 96, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;

(5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

Orders of Reference - Seanad Éireann

(1) That a Select Committee consisting of 5 Members to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

(2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-

(a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-

- (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
- (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;
- (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
- (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
- (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
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- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
- (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
- (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.

(4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 72, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;

(5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

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