

Dear Friend,

My name is Michael Mac Aogáin. I am a 62 year old citizen of this country, Ireland. I have applied 8 times for a Primary Medical Certificate since the occurrence of a life changing RTA on Tuesday June 10th 2008. From this accident I suffered a complete Brachial Plexus Injury. Root avulsion of C5,6,7, 8, and T1. This left me with no motive power or sensory perception from the tip of my left shoulder to the tips of my fingers on my left hand. I also damaged my Phrenic nerve leaving me with my left diaphragm in an elevated position, meaning that for the last 16 years I am operating on the capacity of one lung.

Due to breakdown of the skin on my left arm I had to have my left arm complete amputated at Christmas 2016. I am also Asthmatic and a type 1 diabetic.

By trade I was a successful electrical service engineer and ran a successful business in the south east of the country covering an area from Dungarvan to Wicklow town and in as far as Carlow and Kilkenny, contracted to the biggest soft drinks company in the world. I trained youths to the trade of electrician and refrigeration engineer. Following the accident I had to step back and employ people to do my work while I tried to come terms with my disability. My mental health suffered I finished training my last apprentice in 2016 and closed the company.

I have no idea as to how much money I have spent on cars and having them adapted to suit me. But over the past 16 years it must be in the hundreds of thousands

I hold a blue badge for disabled drivers meaning that the Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland recognise me as being a disabled driver, but not my Government or the state. They punish me financially and discriminate against me purely on the severity of my disability.

Our government signed the UNCRPD in 2006 and were the last country to ratify it in March 2018.

Since then I feel that they have failed me and a cohort of 15 individuals living with the same injury, a single limb amputee.

If I was a leg amputee I could get a prosthetic leg and walk again and get a PMC. But, as a tradesman, having lost my left arm and hand, if I get a prosthesis, will I get the full use of my hand again. Now, which is the more debilitating, yet we do not qualify for a PMC.

Now since UNCRPD was written to level the playing field for people with disability in comparison to fully abled bodied persons in areas relating to housing, work, social inclusion, and transport I would contest that instead of working towards fulfilling all articles of the convention, our government are, more than ever working towards discriminating against people with disability.

Since closing my business in 2016 I returned to education and completed an honours degree in Applied Social Studies and now work in the mental health sector with Focus Ireland in Wexford and Waterford. I must have a car for my work as I work in the community across both counties. I find it ironic that I have to provide my own transport, minus a Primary Medical Cert, to provide services to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Services that our government leave to underfunded NGO's to provide.

Allowing for all of the above I can only conclude that our state is negatively paying any service to the disabled population of society. They are certainly not trying in any form or matter to implement any of the articles of UNCRPD and continue to discriminate against our disabled population in many ways and on many fronts.

For example the HSE are supposed to work in line with the FREDA Principles in working with people living with disability. These principles being Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy. Now can anybody explain to me as to how, by failing to give me and my colleagues a Primary Medical Certificate, that the HSE as an independent body are living up to or implementing ANY of these principles?

I would very much like to make a presentation and submission to any public hearing or committee pertaining to UNCRPD and discrimination by the Irish State against persons living with disability in

Ireland in the 21st century. Something we as a nation should hang our heads in shame over not providing care and equality to people living through no fault of their own with SEVERE disability. Thanking you for reading my submission and looking looking forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,  
Michael Mac Aogáin.