



Pre-Budget Submission 2021 Forgotten Citizens



National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers

Supporting people with intellectual disability (CLG)

Rights

Budget 2021 must provide **resources to make rights real** for people with disabilities

Supports for people with disabilities were already in crisis before Covid 19. The pandemic has exacerbated this crisis to breaking point.

- The resilience of people with disabilities and their families has been severely tested during Covid-19.
- Many lacked essential supports before the pandemic and the reduction of those that they had, has impacted severely. Many have told us they cannot continue to cope.
- Children are on long waiting lists for services with some aging out of the early intervention before receiving supports.
- Almost 3000 people with disabilities are still living in congregated settings. ⁱ
- 1300 younger people with disabilities under the age of 65 are inappropriately accommodated in nursing homes. ⁱⁱ
- More than 1250 people are supported in the family home by a primary carer who is over the age of 70, at least 400 of whom are over the age of 80. ⁱⁱⁱ
- Current resources have allowed services to resume to approximately 40% of capacity pre COVID-19, but this leaves many people without the level of support that they need.

Guided by Evidence

Publish the **'Capacity Review of Disability Services'** without delay, to guide the funding decisions for people with disabilities

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that people with disabilities must *'have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community'*.

However, there is ample evidence, in numerous reports of these needs being unmet due to a lack of resources. ^{iv}

At this time resources are so scarce that there is no pathway for individuals with disabilities to apply to access supports to live in the community, other than through an emergency.

The sustainability of services to continue to operate is severely challenged by underfunding, which has led to significant deficits being carried by the organisations. ^v

The services provided to individuals supported by Section 39 organisations are further undermined by the lack of equality in terms of pay and conditions, causing a staff retention and recruitment crisis. ^{vi}

A Capacity Review of Disability Services undertaken by the Department of Health sets out the evidence required to guide the funding decisions to be made in Budget 2021 for people with disabilities. This must be published and acted on without delay.

Resources

Commit to **ringfenced multiannual funding. €211 million is needed per year for 5 years** to address underlying needs, deficits and inequalities.

The publication of the Capacity Review of Disability Services will only be of benefit and have any meaningful impact on supporting the rights of people with disabilities if:

There is commitment **to ringfenced, multiannual investment** in line with the requirements of the report;

- Initial investment of €211 million is made in 2021 to address the most pressing needs, which have become even more urgent in the context of reduced supports experienced due to Covid 19;
- Structural and fundamental issues affecting the sustainability of services to support people are addressed – including deficits and Section 39 parity.

Funding for Covid-19 related costs must be provided to enable services to provide adequate supports in 2021.

References

People with intellectual disabilities have told us they feel forgotten by the Government

ⁱ HIQA: Annual overview report on the inspection and regulation of disability services in 2019. September 2020. Identifies that 2914 people with disabilities currently remain living in congregated settings in Ireland.

ⁱⁱ Pierce, Kilcullen & Duffy (2018) The situation of younger people with disabilities living in nursing homes in Ireland. https://www.disability-federation.ie/assets/files/pdf/dfi_rr_2018_web.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers Survey, January 2020

^{iv} E.g. <http://nda.ie/Publications/Disability-Supports/Transforming-Lives.pdf>

^v <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/hse-says-provision-of-disability-services-by-voluntary-bodies-not-sustainable-1.4320197>

^{vi} <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-12-18/44/>