

23rd October 2023

Parent Representatives

Donegal North, Donegal East & Inishowen, Donegal South West CDNTs

Re: Update on pathway for children to access essential equipment from the HSE

Dear Parent Representatives,

Further to the meeting held with you, your invited Special Needs Parents Network representatives and Elected Officials on the 06.10.2023, I am reporting back on an agreed priority action. This action was to provide a pathway for children to access essential equipment from the HSE.

In the first instance, where a child has an equipment need and has an identified Physiotherapist (PT), Occupational Therapist (OT) or Speech & Language Therapist (SLT) to deal with the equipment related matter, the parent/carer should contact the relevant clinician. However as there are many children without an identified clinician in the related disciplines in CDNTs due to staff shortages, the contact person in this scenario is the child's keyworker. If the child has no assigned keyworker then the contact person is the Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM).

An updated review of children on the CDNT caseloads with immediate, prioritised Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy equipment needs has been undertaken to identify the relevant children. Arising from the review of need the following actions are agreed:

- Children identified as high priority for a specialist seating service to receive an early appointment from the service as agreed with OT Manager.
- A CDNM Manager who is a trained & experienced Paediatric Physiotherapist will meet the needs of the children who meet the criteria for Priority 1(P1) attendances at the Development and Splint Clinic.
- A Senior Physiotherapist will complete the reviews and adjustments of the home based equipment for children who meet the P1 criteria for such equipment.

Note: the CDNM and Senior Physiotherapist will complete this via overtime week commencing 30th October 2023 and will be carried out at Millennium Court HSE premises in Letterkenny &/or the child's family home where it is not practical to bring equipment to a clinic setting.

- Human Resources are scoping the redeployment of staff from Primary Care to assist with specific cohorts of children identified with prioritised equipment



needs. Meetings with relevant parties have commenced & it is expected to have further detail on this area in the coming weeks.

- Private therapy providers are being contacted specifically seeking a contract to be established whereby the provider would deliver OT equipment related services to those children prioritised.

The HSE continues to progress and work on recruitment as the longer term solution to the delivery of sustainable services. The next monthly update will be provided as agreed with HR in the coming weeks.

Also for your information, the **HSE Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023-2026, Disability Services for Children and Young People** is to be launched this week by Ministers Roderic O’Gorman and Anne Rabbitte. The Roadmap is a targeted Service Improvement Programme with the primary objective to achieve a quality, accessible, equitable and timely service for children and young people. Community Healthcare management has been advised that the Roadmap includes sixty actions under the following headings:

- Integrated Services between Disabilities, Primary Care, CAMHS and Tusla
- CDNT Service Access and Improvement (including Assessment of Need)
- Workforce
- Communication and Engagement with Children and Families, and with Staff
- Engagement with Education and Support for Special Schools

HSE services in the area will continue to address the matters raised at the meeting held last week on 16.10.2023 & are actively progressing plans ongoing which we will update you on at our next meeting on 24.11.2023.

Yours sincerely,

Edel Quinn
Head of Service Disability CH CDLMS
Ceann na Seirbhíse Míchumas
Eagraíocht Chúram Sláinte Limistéar CDLMS

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Elected Representatives
HSE representatives