

**Minutes of Disability Consultative Committee meeting
Tuesday 19th May 2020, 12:00 Noon**

In attendance

Patsy Carr	Chair, Department of Health
Dave O' Connor	Department of Health
Michael Murchan,	Department of Health
Billy McCarthy,	Department of Health
Mark O' Connor	Inclusion Ireland
Una Nagle	Brothers of Charity
Geraldine Graydon	National Parents & Siblings Alliance /ASFAN
Dharragh Hunt	NDA

Apologies:

Ann Melly, HSE; Joanne McCarthy DFI; Alison Harnett Nat Federation of Voluntary Bodies; Kate Byrne, DSG; Tom Casey, DSG.

1. Apologies were noted.

Minutes of meeting held on 22nd January 2020 were adopted without amendments.

2. NDIS Steering Group Meeting Update.

D/Health provided an update on this meeting which took place on 14th May by video conference, chaired by Minister Mc Grath. The focus of the meeting was the Department of Justice and Equality's (DJE) coordination of the UNCRPD report. The next stages in this process are as follows-

End of May: DJE circulates draft Initial State Report to Departments for review.

End of June: Departments return observations to DJE. DJE completes Initial State Report.

Mid-July: Initial State Report is made available for public consultation.

DJE has committed to establishing and funding, on a one-year start-up phase a new "Disability Participation and Consultation Model" that will work towards fulfilling Ireland's obligations under the UNCRPD and achieve the goals of the NDIS.

The Government approved the development of such a model when it approved the NDIS mid-term review.

The timeframe for completing this work is the end of 2020

3. Covid 19 Disabilities Update, D/Health.

D/Health reported that there had been 14 deaths recorded in Disability Settings. In terms of outbreaks in disability centres, there were outbreaks in 105 centres while 8 centres have had their outbreak closed (it is 28 days since they have had a confirmed case of Covid 19). It was noted that this is very positive news. In response to a request for data to be published on a regular basis, the Department informed the meeting that residential disability data is included in the Health Protection Surveillance Centre data under Long Term Residential Centres published on its website daily.

D/Health acknowledged the excellent work done by the service providers and representative organisations to ensure alternative services were developed in some cases e.g. Enable Ireland who developed web based remote services, and the Irish Wheelchair Association who made

their transport fleet available for COVID 19 testing, while representative organisations such as Inclusion Ireland assisted the HSE in the development of Q&A material on COVID 19 to ensure material met the needs of individuals. In addition, Ministers Harris and McGrath both praised the way service providers and advocacy groups worked together to ensure service users were protected during this period of uncertainty.

D/health also reported that engagement was underway with the HSE & DES regarding the development of a summer programme - to include activity-based respite for a cohort of Children with complex needs as part of an alternative Dept of Education 'July Provision'. It was recognised that service provision to this group post- summer needs be examined and ramped up wherever possible. It is envisaged that the HSE will run a health led service where special schools and SNAs are made available to support the provision of service.

In addition, the Dept of education will develop an education service with broader scope. The use of family resource centres is also being considered as a respite support initiative for families.

Action - It was agreed to forward useful links and information published by the Vulnerable People's Sub-Group to the committee.

Geraldine Graydon expressed concern about some of the information regarding Covid 19 especially for those engaging with adults with ASD. It was too generic and needs to be more autism informed. She added that some groups representing those with autism have not been consulted and that needs addressing.

The Chair stated that the HSE has been engaged in on-going consultation with representative groups across the Disability sector, including those representing people with ASD.

Mental Health Update

Michael Murchan reported that the incidence of Covid 19 in Mental Health Units and settings has been very low. While face-to-face meetings have had to cease, the DoH & the HSE have been working very closely with the Mental Health sector. Websites such as - Yourmentalhealth.ie and Gov.ie outline assistance that is available to people with mental health issues and to the population, particularly about promoting health & wellbeing during the Covid 19 crisis.

The HSE will shortly officially launch the new CAMHS Connect on-line service for HSE West, recently announced by Minister Daly. This will potentially pave the way for roll-out of a similar digital response system nationally, thus improving in many respects adult or child mental health services ranging from community care to residential care, including the new HSE National Forensic Mental Health Service at Portrane.

6. AOB – Assess to AON for Adults -

The Chair advised the meeting that consideration of whether statutory access to Assessment of Need will be made to adults will be a matter for Government. The current pandemic has necessitated a major focus of resources on Covid 19 mitigation work. The meeting will be kept informed of developments.

Next Meeting.

The next meeting will be scheduled within one month or so, details will be forwarded when a date has been agreed.