

National Ability Supports
System (NASS)

NASS Regional Bulletin for CHO 4 – Kerry and Cork, 2023

1 Background

This bulletin is based on validated data extracted from the National Ability Supports System (NASS) at the end of December 2023 for people who received their main service in Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) area 4. NASS is a national database that records information about current Health Service Executive (HSE) funded disability services¹ and services required in the next five years. Disability services can be required as a result of an intellectual disability (ID); developmental delay, physical, sensory, neurological,² learning, and speech and/or language disabilities; or autism. Mental health is only recorded on NASS where an individual is in receipt of a HSE funded disability service.

The purpose of NASS is to gather information from service providers in order to aid the planning, development, and organisation of HSE funded disability services. A person is eligible to be registered on NASS if they receive or require (either currently or within the next five years) a HSE funded disability service as identified by their service provider.

There are some 18-year-olds who have moved to adult services while others remain in children's services until they finish secondary school. In this bulletin, 'children' includes service users aged 19 years³ and under who are engaging with children's disability services, and 'adults' refers to those engaging with adult disability services.

This bulletin presents an overview of the information recorded on NASS for people engaging with disability services in CHO 4. In total, 5,837 people are included in this bulletin, of which 222 were children and 5,615 were adults.

¹ 'HSE funded disability services' refers to the budget the HSE uses to fund services for people with disabilities. In 2023, the overall budget for disability services was €2.4 billion. See <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/59a35-minister-anne-rabbitte-announces-disability-services-budget-for-2023/>

² A neurological disability can include epilepsy, spina bifida, Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis, acquired brain injury, and Parkinson's disease. This term applies to impairments of the nervous system.

³ There are a small number of people who remain in children's services past the age of 18, as they are still attending school.

1.1 Data collection

Information on NASS is captured under four headings:

- Service user details
- Primary carer details
- Disability type and diagnosis, and
- Services.

A primary disability should be recorded by the service provider for every person on NASS. There is also an option for reporting additional disability type(s). A primary disability refers to the disability which most restricts a person's ability to take part in daily life and/or the disability that gives rise to using/needing the most disability-funded services.

Within the Services heading, NASS captures 77 service options across 6 service types:

- Residential setting
- Day services
- Day respite
- Overnight respite
- Supports for daily living (for example, home support, a personal assistant, or community support), and
- Specialist supports/support services - including multidisciplinary services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy and other specialised support services such as vision/aural rehabilitation services, assistive technology and animal-assisted therapy.

Service providers record information about current services funded through the HSE disability budget and services identified as being currently required or that will be required within the next five years.

1.2 Limitations of the data

It is important to note that information from the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) was not provided to NASS in 2023. This is due to the delayed rollout of the HSE's dedicated children's case management system (CDNT-IMS) for use by the CDNTs. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of children reported on NASS for 2023 compared to 2022. There were over 33,000 children who were engaged in CDNTs in 2022 that were not reviewed in 2023. It is hoped that NASS will have improved coverage of children accessing HSE funded disability services for 2024 as a result of a planned upload of data from CDNT-IMS to NASS by year end.

Information on day services received in 2023 reported to NASS were compared to the HSE, National Day Services Database (NDSD). Information on day services received in 2023 on NASS is lower than what was reported in the NDSD. Work is underway to identify service providers who are not on NASS and, service providers who are underreporting their data to NASS.

2 Children in CHO 4 on NASS in 2023

There were 222 children recorded in CHO 4 in 2023 as receiving either residential, respite, home support and/or specialised support services.

As mentioned in Section 1.2, NASS did not receive complete updated data from the CDNTs due to the delayed roll out of the CDNT-IMS. Therefore, we are unable to report on children attending CDNTs for their multidisciplinary therapies.

3 Adults engaging with disability services in CHO 4

3.1 Number of adults on NASS in CHO 4 in 2023

There were 5,615 adults recorded as accessing or requiring a HSE funded disability service in CHO 4 in 2023.

3.2 Demographic profile

There were more males (3,227; 58%) engaging with services in CHO 4 compared with females (2,388; 43%). Table 1 shows the age and sex breakdown of adults in CHO 4.

Table 1 Number of adults in disability services in CHO 4 by age group and sex, 2023

Age groups	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
18-24 years	712	12.7	361	6.4	1,073	19.1
25-39 years	899	16.0	525	9.3	1,424	25.4
40-59 years	1,024	18.2	880	15.7	1,904	33.9
60-69 years	372	6.6	384	6.8	756	13.5
≥ 70 years	220	3.9	238	4.2	458	8.2
Total	3,227	57.5	2,388	42.5	5,615	100

3.3 Occupational status

Information on occupational status was available for 86% (4,828) of the 5,615 adults accessing or requiring an adult HSE funded disability service in 2023, in CHO 4, of whom:

- Over one-half (52%; 2,519) were in a training or day programme.
- One-in-four (25%; 1,185) were unable to work due to a disability.
- Ten-percent (492) were in paid employment.
- Five-percent (236) were unemployed.
- Four-percent (210) were retired.
- The remaining 4% were students (3%; 128), engaged in home duties (1%; 46), or had 'other occupational status' recorded (<1%; 12).

3.4 Living arrangements

Information on living arrangements was available for 78% (4,368) of the 5,615 adults accessing or requiring adult HSE funded disability services in CHO 4, of whom:

- Three-in-five (62%; 2,688) were residing with family members.
- Over one-quarter (27%; 1,173) were living in a residential service setting.
- One-in-ten (10%; 445) were living alone.
- The remaining 1% (62) were living with non-relatives.

3.5 Reported disabilities

The most frequently reported disability amongst adults in CHO 4 was ID (2,945; 52%), followed by autism (800; 14%), and neurological disability (640; 11%) (Table 2).

Table 2 Primary disability among adults in CHO 4 on NASS by sex, 2023

Primary disability	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Intellectual	1,701	57.8	1,244	42.2	2,945	52.4
Autism	595	74.4	205	25.6	800	14.2
Neurological	331	51.7	309	48.3	640	11.4
Visual	262	50.4	258	49.6	520	9.3
Physical	190	46.2	221	53.8	411	7.3
Hearing loss/deafness	91	45.0	111	55.0	202	3.6
Mental health	49	59.0	34	41.0	83	1.5
Specific learning difficulty (other than intellectual)	~	~	~	~	8	0.1
Speech and/or language	~	~	0	0	~	~
DeafBlind-dual sensory	~	~	~	~	~	~
Not verified*	0	0	~	~	~	~
Total	3,227	57.5	2,388	42.5	5,615	100

~ In order to protect against the risk of indirect identification of individuals, values less than 5, or where individuals may be identified, have been suppressed.

* Not verified - Where the type of disability has not been verified for an individual by an appropriate healthcare professional.

3.6 Additional disabilities

A total of 1,785 adults had at least one additional disability along with their primary disability recorded. The most commonly reported additional disability was physical disability (812) followed by speech and/or language disability (385) and visual disability (232).

3.7 Primary carer

Of adults registered on NASS who do not live in a residential setting (79%; 4,442), thirty-nine percent (39%; 1,734) reported having a primary carer; almost all of these individuals live with their primary carer (93%; 1,609).

The majority (72%; 1,246) of primary carers were parents, 13% (219) were a wife/husband/partner, 10% (181) were siblings and 2% (35) were a daughter/son. The remaining 3% were either another relative (2%; 30), a non-relative (1%; 12), or a foster parent (<1%; 7).

Age was recorded for 80% (1,388) of primary carers; 49% (673) of whom were aged 60 years and over.

4 Services

This section reports on the HSE funded disability services people with disabilities use and/or will require in the next five years, as reported by their service providers, in the following categories:

- Residential and assisted living services
- Day services
- Day and overnight respite, and
- Support services (including multidisciplinary, and specialised support services).

The information presented in this section represents whether a service was recorded as:

- **Current services:** The number of places accessed in the reporting year.
- **Enhancement required to current services:** The number of places accessed which require an enhancement in the next 12 months; for example, additional hours/days or additional support.
- **New services required:** The number of new places required for those not in receipt of that service but who require it now or will require it within the next five years.

Information on residential services, assisted living services and, respite (day and overnight) services is presented for the full cohort of people. Information on support services for children is incomplete; therefore, these data are only presented for adults.

Individuals may access one or more services within our broad categories of services outlined e.g. a person can access both centre based overnight respite and holiday overnight respite over the calendar year.

4.1 Current service provision

The following outlines 2023 data for current service provision in CHO 4.

- A total of 1,105 people were recorded as living in a residential setting in CHO 4.
 - The majority were adults.
 - A residential centre with 10 or more residents (400) was the most common type of residential setting, followed by community group home with between five and nine residents (389), and a house in the community (278) with four or fewer residents.
 - Of the 1,105 people living in a residential setting, 32% (353) require an enhancement to their current service.
- A total of 750 people were in receipt of 795 assisted living services. Assisted living services include services captured on NASS as home support, and personal assistant.
 - Of these, 10 were children and 740 were adults.
 - Of the 795 assisted living services, 337 were home support services and 458 were personal assistant services.
 - Of the 750 people in receipt of a home support service, 19% (142) required an enhancement to their assisted living service.
- A total of 3,468 adults accessed at least one day service.
 - A day programme was the most commonly accessed (3,177; 92%) type of day service.
 - Rehabilitative training was received by 324 adults.
 - Of the 3,468 adults accessing a day service, 22% (753) require an enhancement to their current day service.
- Overall, 49 people accessed day respite places in CHO 4.
 - Most were respite provided in the person's own home (27).

- A total of 226 people accessed 229 overnight respite places.
 - Of these, 43 were children and 183 were adults.
 - The most commonly accessed type of overnight respite was a house in the community or a dedicated respite centre (195).
 - A total of 7,683 nights of overnight respite were received.
 - Of the 226 people accessing overnight respite, 30% (67) require an enhancement to their current service.
- 2,923 adults received one or more support services from either a multidisciplinary team or a specialised disability service in 2023.
 - The most commonly accessed support services were nursing (1,144), social work (976), and occupational therapy (723).
 - Of the 2,923 adults accessing support services, 46% (1,344) required an enhancement to at least one of their support services.

4.2 New services required for 2023–2028

As outlined in Section 1, NASS collects information on the HSE funded disability services that people with disabilities currently use and/or will require in the next five years. New services required are the number of new places that service providers have identified as being required by people who are not yet in receipt of a particular type of service but who need it now or will need it within the next five years.

The following outlines data regarding new services required for 2023-2028, as identified by service providers in CHO 4.

- A total of 252 people were identified by service providers as requiring a residential service.
 - All were adults.
 - Of the residential services required, 77% (195) are for a place in a house in the community with four or fewer residents.
 - Of the 252 residential services required, 62% (157) are required immediately i.e. required in 2023; 10% (25) are required in 2024; and 18% (46) are required in 2025.
- Service providers identified 142 people as requiring assisted living services.
 - Almost all (140; 99%) were adults.
 - Overall, 105 of these services required were for home support.
- There are 666 people requiring a day service in 2024⁴.
 - A day programme is required by 478 people, and rehabilitative training is required by 188 people.
- Overall, 246 people require overnight respite.
 - Of these, 245 were adults.
 - Overnight respite in a house in the community or a dedicated respite centre is the most commonly required (147).
- Overall, 287 adults require at least one support service.
 - The support services most commonly required are physiotherapy (78), neuropsychology (61) and occupational therapy (60).

⁴ Information on day services required in 2024 was provided for this bulletin by the HSE National Day Service Database (NDSD).

5 Publications and analysis

This bulletin provides an overview of data from NASS about people who received their main service in Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) area 4. This bulletin should be read in conjunction with the main NASS bulletin 'Overview of people engaging with disability services, 2023'. Additional supplementary bulletins presenting information on people with an intellectual disability, physical or sensory disabilities, and by each CHO area are available on the Health Research Board (HRB) website <https://www.hrb.ie/data-collections-evidence/disability-service-use-and-need/publications/>.

Requests for further analysis with more detailed or different breakdowns are welcomed. Please visit <https://www.hrb.ie/data-collections-evidence/disability-service-use-and-need/request-data/> to access a data request form and return it to nass@hrb.ie.

