

National Ability Supports
System (NASS)

**NASS Regional Bulletin
for CHO 1-Donegal,
Sligo, Leitrim, Monaghan,
Cavan, 2022**

1 Background

This bulletin is based on validated data extracted from the National Ability Supports System (NASS) at the end of December 2022 for Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) area 1. NASS is a national database that records information about current Health Service Executive (HSE) disability-funded¹ services and services required in the next 5 years. Disability-funded 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 disability-funded service.

The purpose of NASS is to gather information from service providers in order to aid the planning, development, and organisation of HSE disability-funded services. A person is eligible to be registered on NASS if they receive or require (either currently or within the next 5 years) a HSE disability-funded 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 18 years 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 1. In total, 5,038 people are included in this bulletin, of which 1,627 are children and 3,411 are adults.

¹ 'HSE disability -funded' refers to the budget the HSE uses to fund services for people with disabilities. In 2022, 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.

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 (for example, physiotherapy, speech and/or language therapy, or occupational 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 5 years.

1.2 Limitations of the data

It is important to note that the data returned for children by the newly established Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) are less complete than the data provided by service providers for adults accessing HSE disability-funded services. Overall, a significant increase in the number of children registered on NASS was achieved in 2022. However, the data are largely incomplete for most of these children. Work is ongoing with our partners in the HSE to improve the completeness of these data.

2 Profile of children engaging with children's disability services in CHO 1

2.1 Number of children registered on NASS in CHO 1 in 2022

In 2022, there were 1,627 children registered on NASS as receiving their main service in CHO 1.

2.2 Demographic profile

There were more male (1,151; 71%) children than female (476; 29%) children registered on NASS in CHO 1.

Over one-half of children in CHO 1 were aged 5-12 years (52%; 844), 30% were aged 13-17 years (485). The remaining children were aged 0-4 years (270; 17%) and 18 years (28; 2%) (Table 1).

Table 1 Number of children registered on NASS in children's disability services in CHO 1 by age group and sex, 2022

	Male		Female		Total	
Age groups	n	%	n	%	n	%
0-4 years	170	10.4	100	6.1	270	16.6
5-12 years	622	38.2	222	13.6	844	51.9
13-17 years	340	20.9	145	8.9	485	29.8
18 years	19	1.2	9	0.6	28	1.7
Total	1,151	70.7	476	29.3	1,627	100.0

2.3 Reported disabilities

The most frequently reported primary disability type was autism (633; 39%), followed by an ID (505; 31%) and developmental delay (184; 11%) (Table 2).

Table 2 Primary disability among children registered for children’s disability services in CHO 1 on NASS by sex, 2022

Primary disability	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Autism	508	80.3	125	19.7	633	38.9
Intellectual	325	64.4	180	35.6	505	31.0
Developmental delay (children aged under 10 years only)	122	66.3	62	33.7	184	11.3
Physical	84	65.6	44	34.4	128	7.9
Neurological	41	58.6	29	41.4	70	4.3
Hearing loss and/or deafness	14	56.0	11	44.0	25	1.5
Visual	9	64.3	5	35.7	14	0.9
Speech and/or language	9	90.0	~	~	~	~
Specific learning difficulty (other than intellectual)	5	50.0	5	50.0	10	0.6
Mental health*	~	~	0	0.0	~	~
Not verified**	33	70.2	14	29.8	47	2.9
Total	1,151	70.7	476	29.3	1,627	100.0

* All those with a primary disability of mental health had a secondary disability type eligible for HSE disability-funded services.

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

~ 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.

2.4 Additional disabilities

A total of 649 children had at least one additional disability along with their primary disability recorded. The most commonly reported additional disability was a speech and/or language disability (201), followed by autism (193) and an ID (138).

3 Profile of adults engaging with adult disability services in CHO 1

3.1 Number of adults registered on NASS in CHO 1 in 2022

In 2022, there were 3,411 adults engaging with adult disability services in CHO 1.

3.2 Demographic profile

There were more female (1,768; 52%) adults registered in CHO 1 compared with males (1,643; 48%). Table 3 shows the age and sex breakdown of adults registered in CHO 1.

Table 3 Number of adults registered in adult disability services in CHO 1 by age group and sex, 2022

Age groups	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
18-24 years	259	7.6	153	4.5	412	12.1
25-39 years	356	10.4	309	9.1	665	19.5
40-59 years	602	17.6	715	21.0	1,317	38.6
60-69 years	263	7.7	386	11.3	649	19.0
≥ 70 years	163	4.8	205	6.0	368	10.8
Total	1,643	48.2	1,768	51.8	3,411	100.0

3.3 Occupational status

Information on occupational status was available for 90% (3,081) of the 3,411 adults accessing or requiring an adult HSE disability-funded service in 2022, in CHO 1, of whom:

- Nearly one-third (30%; 926) were in a training or day programme.
- Three in ten (30%; 917) were unable to work due to a disability.
- Fourteen percent were retired (420).
- One in ten were in paid employment (10%; 309).
- Nearly one in ten (9%; 290) were unemployed.
- The remaining 7% were students (3%; 102), engaged in home duties (3%, 82) or had 'other occupational status' recorded (1%, 35).

3.4 Ethnicity or cultural background

Where ethnicity or cultural background information was known (3,015; 88% of the total), 95% (2,863) of adults were Irish. A total of 4% (118) were from any other white background.

3.5 Living arrangements

Information on living arrangements was available for 98% (3,348) of the 3,411 adults accessing or requiring adult HSE disability-funded services in CHO 1, of whom:

- Nearly two-thirds (65%; 2,180) were residing with family members.
- Nearly one-fifth (18%; 600) were living in a residential service setting.
- Sixteen percent (532) of people were living alone.
- The remaining 1% (36) were living with non-relatives.

3.6 Reported disabilities

The most frequently reported disability amongst adults in CHO 1 was an ID (1,404; 41%), followed by a neurological disability (1,192; 35%) and hearing loss/deafness (370; 11%) (Table 4).

Table 4 Primary disability among adults registered for adults disability services in CHO 1 on NASS by sex, 2022

Primary disability	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Intellectual	748	53.3	656	46.7	1,404	41.2
Neurological	490	41.1	702	58.9	1,192	34.9
Hearing loss/deafness	166	44.9	204	55.1	370	10.8
Physical	90	41.1	129	58.9	219	6.4
Autism	77	76.2	24	23.8	101	3.0
Visual	47	57.3	35	42.7	82	2.4
Mental health*	16	61.5	10	38.5	26	0.8
Specific learning difficulty (other than intellectual)	~	~	6	60.0	~	~
DeafBlind – dual sensory	~	~	0	0.0	~	~
Speech and/or language	~	~	0	0.0	~	~
Not verified**	~	~	~	~	~	~
Total	1,643	48.2	1,768	51.8	3,411	100.0

* All those with a primary disability of mental health had a secondary disability type eligible for HSE disability-funded services.

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

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3.7 Additional disabilities

A total of 1,360 adults had at least one additional disability along with their primary disability recorded. The most commonly reported additional disability was a physical disability (611), followed by a speech and/or language disability (311) and a visual disability (198).

3.8 Primary carer

Of adults registered on NASS who do not live in a residential setting (2,810; 82%), over one-half (54%; 1,521) reported having a primary carer; almost all of these individuals live with their primary carer (87%; 1,325).

The majority (57%; 870) of primary carers were parents, 24% (359) were a wife/husband/partner, 11% (169) were siblings and 4% (56) were a daughter/son. The remaining 4% were either a non-relative (2%; 31) or another relative (2%; 24). Age was recorded for 94% (1,437) of primary carers; 39% (560) of whom were aged 60 years and over.

4 Services

NASS collects information on the HSE disability-funded services people with disabilities use and/or will require in the next 5 years, as reported by their service providers, in the following categories:

- Residential and home support services
- Day services
- Day and overnight respite, and
- Support services (including personal assistant (PA), multidisciplinary, and specialised disability supports).

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 5 years.

This section reports on children and adults engaging with disability services. Information on residential services, respite (day and overnight) services, and supports for daily living is presented for the full cohort of people. Information on specialist supports 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 day respite and day respite in their own home over the calendar year.

4.1 Current service provision

The following outlines 2022 data for current service provision in CHO 1.

- A total of 585 people were recorded as living in a residential setting in CHO 1.
 - The majority (99%; 583) were adults.
 - A house in the community with four or fewer residents was the most commonly accessed residential service (255), followed by a community group home (231) and a residential centre on campus (55).
 - Of the 585 people living in a residential setting, 22% (64) require an enhancement to their current service.
- There were 454 people accessing home support.
 - Of these, 80 were children and 374 were adults.
 - Of the 454 people in receipt of a home support service, 23% (106) required an enhancement to that service.
- A total of 1,493 adults accessed at least one day service.
 - A day programme was the most commonly accessed (1,292; 87%) type of day service.
 - Rehabilitative training was received by 207 adults and neuro-rehabilitative training was accessed by a small number of adults.
 - Of the 1,493 adults accessing a day service, 21% (307) of their day services require an enhancement to their current service.
- Overall, 115 people accessed 126 day respite places in CHO 1.
 - Of these, 78 were children and 37 were adults.
 - Of the day respite places provided, 63 were in the person's own home and 59 were centre-based respite.
 - Of the 115 people accessing day respite, 16% (18) required an enhancement to their service.

- A total of 273 people accessed 279 overnight respite places.
 - Of these, 65 were children and 208 were adults.
 - The most commonly accessed type of overnight respite was a house in the community or a dedicated respite centre (242).
 - A total of 4,130 nights of overnight respite were received. Children accessed 1,291 nights and adults accessed 2,839 nights in 2022.
 - Of the 273 people accessing overnight respite, 52% (143) require an enhancement to their current service.
- Additionally, 195 people accessed the services of a PA and 145 people used a transport service.
- Of the 1,627 children registered on NASS in CHO 1, 89% (1,446) were assessed and found to require the support of a multidisciplinary CDNT.
- 2,633 adults accessed 4,999 specialist supports.
 - The most commonly accessed specialist support services are key worker (837), physiotherapy (714), nursing (517), and occupational therapy (517).
 - Of the 2,633 adults accessing specialist support services, 16% (428) required an enhancement to at least one of their specialist supports.

4.2 New services required for 2022–2027

As outlined in Section 1, NASS collects information on the HSE disability-funded services that people with disabilities currently use and/or will require in the next 5 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 5 years.

The following outlines data regarding new services required for 2022-2027, as identified by service providers in CHO 1.

- A total of 139 people were identified by service providers as requiring a residential service.
 - Of these, 135 were adults.
 - Of the residential services required, 86% (120) are for a place in a house in the community with four or fewer residents.
- A total of 64 people required home support.
- Overall, 69 adults require a day service, of which 66 were a day programme.
- A total of 32 people require a day respite service.
 - Of these, 17 were children and 15 were adults.
- Overall, 117 people require overnight respite.
 - Of these, 33 were children and 84 were adults.
 - Overnight respite in a house in the community or a dedicated respite centre is the most commonly required (70), followed by holiday respite in a residential centre or summer camp (25).
- Overall, 297 adults require a specialist support.
 - The specialist supports most commonly required are physiotherapy (97), followed by speech and language therapy (35).