

National Ability Supports
System (NASS)

**NASS Regional Bulletin
for CHO 8-Laois, Offaly,
Longford, Westmeath,
Louth, Meath, 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 8. 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 8. In total, 9,481 people are included in this bulletin, of which 5,965 are children and 3,516 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 8

2.1 Number of children registered on NASS in CHO 8 in 2022

In 2022, there were 5,965 children registered on NASS as receiving their main service in CHO 8.

2.2 Demographic profile

Information on sex at birth was available for 5,830 (98%) children. There were more male (4,061; 70%) children than female (1,769; 30%) children registered on NASS in CHO 8.

Over one-half of children were aged 5-12 years (57%; 3,419), 26% (1,560) were aged 13-17 years, 16% (922) were aged 0-4 years and 1% (64) were aged 18 years (Table 1).

Table 1 Number of children registered on NASS in children's disability services in CHO 8 by age group and sex, 2022

| Age groups | Male | | Female | | Data on sex not provided | | Total | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 0-4 years | 612 | 10.3 | 283 | 4.7 | 27 | 0.5 | 922 | 15.5 |
| 5-12 years | 2,358 | 39.5 | 980 | 16.4 | 81 | 1.4 | 3,419 | 57.3 |
| 13-17 years | 1,046 | 17.5 | 487 | 8.2 | 27 | 0.5 | 1,560 | 26.2 |
| 18 years | 45 | 0.8 | 19 | 0.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 64 | 1.1 |
| Total | 4,061 | 68.1 | 1,769 | 29.7 | 135 | 2.3 | 5,965 | 100.0 |

2.3 Reported disabilities

Primary disability type was recorded for 2,809 children (47%). Where primary disability type was known, the most frequently reported primary disability type was autism (1,147; 41%), followed by ID (799; 28%), and developmental delay (212,8%).

Table 2 shows the breakdown of primary disability by sex.

Table 2 Primary disability among children registered for children's disability services in CHO 8 on NASS by sex, 2022

| | Male | | Female | | Data on sex not provided | | Total | |
|--|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Primary disability | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Autism | 830 | 72.4 | 291 | 25.4 | 26 | 2.3 | 1,147 | 40.8 |
| Intellectual | 553 | 69.2 | 245 | 30.7 | ~ | ~ | 799 | 28.4 |
| Developmental delay (under 10 years only) | 148 | 69.8 | 64 | 30.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 212 | 7.5 |
| Physical | 129 | 64.5 | 71 | 35.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 200 | 7.1 |
| Neurological | 98 | 66.2 | 50 | 33.8 | 0 | 0.0 | 148 | 5.3 |
| Visual | 58 | 51.8 | 54 | 48.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 112 | 4.0 |
| Speech and/or language | 85 | 81.0 | 20 | 19.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 105 | 3.7 |
| Specific learning difficulty (other than intellectual) | 10 | 58.8 | 7 | 41.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 17 | 0.6 |
| Hearing loss and/or deafness | 8 | 50.0 | 8 | 50.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 16 | 0.6 |
| Mental health* | ~ | ~ | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | ~ | ~ |
| DeafBlind (dual sensory) | 0 | 0.0 | ~ | ~ | 0 | 0.0 | ~ | ~ |
| Not verified** | 29 | 56.9 | 22 | 43.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 51 | 1.8 |
| Total | 1,949 | 69.4 | 833 | 29.7 | 27 | 1.0 | 2,809 | 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 have been suppressed.

2.4 Additional disabilities

A total of 894 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 (384), followed by a physical disability (329), and autism (299).

3 Profile of adults engaging with adult disability services in CHO 8

3.1 Number of adults registered on NASS in CHO 8 in 2022

In 2022, there were 3,516 adults engaging with adult disability services in CHO 8.

3.2 Demographic profile

There were more male (1,994; 57%) adults registered in CHO 8 compared with females (1,522; 43%). Table 3 shows the age and sex breakdown of adults in CHO 8.

Table 3 Number of adults registered in adult disability services in CHO 8 by age group and sex, 2022

| Age groups | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 18-24 years | 458 | 13.0 | 241 | 6.9 | 699 | 19.9 |
| 25-39 years | 486 | 13.8 | 348 | 9.9 | 834 | 23.7 |
| 40-59 years | 665 | 18.9 | 590 | 16.8 | 1,255 | 35.7 |
| 60-69 years | 301 | 8.6 | 247 | 7.0 | 548 | 15.6 |
| ≥ 70 years | 84 | 2.4 | 96 | 2.7 | 180 | 5.1 |
| Total | 1,994 | 56.7 | 1,522 | 43.3 | 3,516 | 100.0 |

3.3 Occupational status

Information on occupational status was available for 91% (3,205) of the 3,516 adults accessing or requiring an adult HSE disability-funded service in 2022, in CHO 8, of whom:

- Nearly two-fifths (38%; 1,210) were in a training or day programme.
- Nearly one-third (32%; 1,036) were unable to work due to a disability.
- Over one in ten (11%; 361) were unemployed.
- Six percent (197) were in paid employment.
- Six percent (181) were retired.
- The remaining 7% were either students (131;4%), had 'other occupational status' recorded (53; 2%), or were engaged in home duties (36; 1%).

3.4 Ethnicity or cultural background

Where ethnicity or cultural background information was known (2,681;76% of the total), 94% (2,513) of adults were Irish. A total of 3% (87) were from any other white background and 1% were Irish Travellers (36).

3.5 Living arrangements

Information on living arrangements was available for 99% (3,472) of the 3,516 adults accessing or requiring adult HSE disability-funded services in CHO 8, of whom:

- Nearly three-fifths (59%; 2,033) were residing with family members.
- Three in ten (30%; 1,039) were living in a residential setting.
- One in ten were living alone (10%; 360).
- The remaining 1% (40) were living with non-relatives.

3.6 Reported disabilities

The most frequently reported disability amongst adults in CHO 8 was an ID (2,269; 65%), followed by a neurological disability (465; 13%), and autism (200; 6%) (Table 4).

Table 4 Primary disability among adults registered in adult disability services in CHO 8 on NASS by sex, 2022

| Primary disability | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|--|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Intellectual | 1,309 | 57.7 | 960 | 42.3 | 2,269 | 64.6 |
| Neurological | 235 | 50.5 | 230 | 49.5 | 465 | 13.2 |
| Autism | 155 | 77.5 | 45 | 22.5 | 200 | 5.7 |
| Visual | 107 | 53.8 | 92 | 46.2 | 199 | 5.7 |
| Physical | 152 | 48.4 | 162 | 51.6 | 314 | 8.9 |
| Hearing loss and/or deafness | 16 | 69.6 | 7 | 30.4 | 23 | 0.7 |
| Mental health* | 11 | 50.0 | 11 | 50.0 | 22 | 0.6 |
| Specific learning difficulty (other than intellectual) | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | 7 | 0.2 |
| DeafBlind (dual sensory) | ~ | ~ | 5 | 83.3 | ~ | ~ |
| Speech and/or language | ~ | ~ | 0 | 0.0 | ~ | ~ |
| Not verified** | ~ | ~ | 5 | 83.3 | ~ | ~ |
| Total | 1,994 | 56.7 | 1,521 | 43.3 | 3,515 | 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.

3.7 Additional disabilities

A total of 1,471 adults had at least one additional disability along with their primary disability recorded. The most commonly reported additional disability was a physical disability (546), followed by a speech and/or language disability (393) and autism (312).

3.8 Primary carer

Of adults registered on NASS who do not live in a residential setting (2,477; 70%), 73% (1,800) reported having a primary carer; almost all of these individuals live with their primary carer (92%; 1,653).

The majority (72%; 1,292) of primary carers were parents, 11% (203) were siblings, 10% (181) were a wife/husband/partner, 2% (43) were a daughter/son. The remaining 5% were either a non-relative (43; 2%) or another relative (35; 2%). Age was recorded for 84% (1,520) of primary carers; 39% (587) 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 8.

- A total of 1,032 people were recorded as living in a residential setting in CHO 8.
 - The majority (97%; 1,006) were adults.
 - A house in the community with four or fewer residents (521) was the most common type of residential setting, followed by a community group home (435).
 - Of the 1,032 people living in a residential setting, 13% (139) require an enhancement to their current service.
- There were 454 people accessing home support.
 - Of these, 110 were children and 344 were adults.
 - Of the 454 people in receipt of home support, 32% (146) required an enhancement to their service.
- A total of 1,911 adults accessed at least one day service.
 - A day programme was the most commonly accessed (1,794; 94%) type of day service.
 - Rehabilitative training was received by 124 adults.
 - Of the 1,911 adults accessing a day service, 24% (456) require an enhancement to their current service.
- Overall, 320 people accessed day respite in CHO 8.
 - Of these, 197 were children and 123 were adults.
 - Of the day respite places provided, 183 people received centre-based respite and 152 received day respite through a home sharing arrangement.
 - Of the 320 people accessing day respite, 9% (29) required an enhancement to their service.

- A total of 698 people accessed 747 overnight respite places.
 - Of these, 179 were children and 519 were adults.
 - The most commonly accessed type of overnight respite was house in the community or a dedicated respite centre (578), followed by a home sharing arrangement (75).
 - A total of 16,126 nights of overnight respite were received in CHO 8. Children accessed 2,901 nights and adults accessed 13,225 nights in 2022.
 - Of the 698 people accessing overnight respite, one-quarter (25%; 176) require an enhancement to their current service.
- There were 229 people availing of a transport service, of whom 111 were children and 118 were adults.
- There were 202 adults accessing the services of a PA.
- Community support was accessed by 153 people, of whom 35 were children and 118 were adults.
- Of the 5,965 children registered on NASS in CHO 8, 97% (5,809) were assessed and found to require the support of a multidisciplinary CDNT.
- 1,962 adults accessed 4,743 specialist supports.
 - The most commonly accessed specialist support services were occupational therapy (715), social work (508) and, and speech and language therapy (506).
 - Of the 1,962 adults accessing specialist support services, 24% (469) 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.

- A total of 147 people were identified by service providers as requiring a residential service, most of whom were adults (145).
 - Of the residential services required, 86% (127) are for a place in a house in the community with four or fewer residents.
- Home support was required by 100 people.
- Overall, 104 adults require a day service, of whom 96 require a day programme.
- A total of 59 people require a day respite service, of whom 43 are children.
- Overall, 171 people require overnight respite.
 - Of these, 78 were children and 93 were adults.
 - Overnight respite in a house in the community or a dedicated respite centre is the most commonly required (154).
- Overall, 407 adults require at least one specialist support.
 - The specialist supports most commonly required are physiotherapy (128), occupational therapy (98) and speech and language therapy (70).