Keeping you informed
Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People Programme

What is this programme about?
At present there are some very good services for children with disabilities and their families but also some large gaps. For example, there may be a service for children with an intellectual disability in a locality, but none for children with a physical disability.

Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People, a national programme led by the HSE, is changing the way services are provided across the country to make it equitable and consistent for all children with disabilities and their families. Services will be provided, based on a child’s needs, rather than their diagnosis and they will be available wherever the child lives or school they go to.

The vision for children’s disability services
- One clear pathway to services for all children with disabilities according to need
- Effective teams working in partnership with parents
- Resources used to the greatest benefit for all children and families
- Health and education working together to support children achieve their potential

Access to services for children & young people to meet their needs
There will be a clear pathway of access to services for children. Parents and health professionals, instead of trying to find their way through a maze of services, will know where a child should be referred.

Many children with delays in development can have their needs met by their local Primary Care services (public health nurse, community speech and language therapy, family doctor, community physiotherapy etc.). Children’s Disability Network Teams will provide services for all children with complex needs and their families, regardless of the child’s disability or where he or she goes to school.

How will this change affect services for my child?
Your child may have no service currently because there is none in your area for his or her particular diagnosis or disability. When this programme is implemented you will have a service to go to with fair prioritisation based on your child’s needs.

Your child may presently be attending a children’s disability service and when the services are reconfigured you will be moving to the local nearest team. You will be advised of all the details of any move before it happens.

This programme cannot solve all the difficulties in delivering disability services in the short term but once services are reorganised into Children’s Disability Network teams locally, it will ensure the best use of those resources available for all children with disabilities.

How is the programme being organised?
A National Working Group guides and oversees the programme. Local Implementation Groups - representatives of services and parents are working out how services can be reorganised to achieve this improved structure in their area.

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This includes

- A review of what services are currently available for children with disabilities
- A review of the needs of children locally
- Planning how best to use resources
- Forming a partnership between all the disability organisations in an area so that they can work together
- Moving the current staff in disability services to form Children’s Disability Network Teams
- Helping families with their move to a new team and service
- Making sure throughout that there is good consultation and communication

**What stage has the programme reached?**

Because of the way services have developed over decades, each part of the country is at a different stage of reconfiguration.

In the Mid West and Meath, services had already changed to this structure prior to the programme and they are continuing to work towards achieving the aims and objectives of the programme. In Mayo, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan, Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath, Louth and Donegal, Early Intervention Teams have been formed and they are now planning for roll out of their School Age Teams by year end.

Services in West Cork, Kerry and Kildare /West Wicklow have reconfigured recently into Children’s Disability Network Teams and they are now focused on developing their services and resolving any issues arising from implementing these major changes. The other local implementation groups are currently planning their changes with the majority on schedule to roll out their teams by year end.

**Local Implementation Groups** headed by a Local Lead, will be where all decisions are made about any local reorganisation of services required. They have been convened in all parts of the country and include representatives of all the service providers in the local area, parents and education. They have a complex task which includes agreeing the principles which should underpin all disability services, mapping of existing services and gaps, consideration of the changes needed in structures and a detailed plan of how to advance. Guidance from the national groups will be available to assist them, but local changes rest largely in their hands.

Everyone who will be affected by these changes should make sure to keep in touch with what is happening locally. Contact your local lead to see how you get involved.

Please see table on the next page for the name and email address of your local lead.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHO</th>
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<th>Local Lead</th>
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UCC's Assistive Technology Outreach Programme

Technology Enhancing Education for All

UCC's Disability Support Service delivers an Assistive Technology (AT) Outreach programme to promote awareness and use of assistive technology in secondary schools. The programme provides awareness raising presentations and demonstrations to students, parents, teachers, SNAs and other stakeholders on the array of AT available to students to help them to maximise their academic potential. In addition we provide free, hands-on training sessions in AT to students and those who support them.

The aim of the programme is to enhance access and transition to Higher Education for students with disabilities who are currently underrepresented at third level. It currently supports schools in the UCC catchment area but all students, parents and educators can attend the free training in UCC and avail of our video gallery on AT and related subjects.

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (AT) is any item or tool — high or low tech — that is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities and to enhance their independence.

This programme targets students who are:

• Blind / visually impaired
• Have physical or multiple disabilities
• Are deaf/hard of hearing
• Have specific learning difficulties

Benefits of the AT Programme

• If you are a student with a disability/learning difficulty AT can help you reach your full potential
• If you are an educator this technology can be a powerful tool in the classroom helping you to facilitate inclusion of all students.

Feedback from some of the participants:

"If only I had known about this programme earlier in secondary school I would have learned more effectively"

"This programme really boosted my confidence"

"Today was the first day that my daughter ever heard anything positive about dyslexia and it reaffirmed her ambition to go to UCC."

"My son is dyspraxic and dyslexic and your presentation has given us great hope for his future."

"It was superb in giving me the hands-on experience of using relevant software"

"The training was very informative and relaxed which broke down a lot of my fears about using technology in my classroom."

For further information on this programme contact:

Deirdre Madden, Assistive Technology Outreach Co-ordinator, Disability Support Service, University College Cork

Phone: 021 4902784 (Wed-Fri), Mobile: 086 7922072, Email: deirdre.madden@ucc.ie

Please visit our website to see a calendars of events where you can book free AT training for students (and their parents) and for educators and you can view our video gallery on AT and related subjects.


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FREE COURSE FOR BABIES NEWBORN – 12 MONTHS

What is baby massage?

Baby massage is a wonderful experience shared between you and your baby. Learning how to massage your baby provides numerous physical, psychological and emotional benefits. Baby massage can help with relieving wind and colic and can help to improve sleep patterns. The course is also a great way to meet your local Community Chartered Physiotherapist and other new parents living in your area.

How long is the course?

The baby massage course is 5 weeks long, once a week for 90 minutes. The class includes tea & coffee.

Who can avail of this free course?

Any parent or carer living in the Dublin South West area (Dublin 12 or 24) can attend this free course with their baby. Classes will be held in Chamber House in Tallaght, D24 or Old County Road Health Centre, D12.

What do I need to bring?

Just your baby and a blanket or towel. You will be provided with massage oil at the classes.

How do I sign up?

Please register your interest by phoning or texting Caitríona Morton, Chartered Physiotherapist on 086-7810146 to find out when the next course begins in your area.
Tots and Tums - A Postnatal Class for new Babies and new Mums

Who can attend?
New mums with babies under 3 months living in the Dublin South West area.

What does it involve?
A chance to meet new mums and meet your local Community Physiotherapists. We will provide information on:

- Getting in shape after pregnancy
- Pelvic floor and tummy muscle exercises after pregnancy
- Tummy time and positioning with your baby
- Bonding with your baby

CLASS CONTENT IS THE SAME EACH MONTH

Where and when?
11.00 – 13.00, in Chamber House, Chamber Square, Tallaght, Dublin 24 (next to Tallaght Library) on the 3rd Thursday of each month:
- May 21st, June 18th

What do I bring?
Just you and your baby! Make sure to wear comfortable clothes as the class will have some practical elements!

Contact & Further information: If you wish to attend, please text 086-7810146

Class is FREE OF CHARGE
A date for your diaries.....

SeatTech’s Annual Equipment Exhibition and Equipment Evaluation Day

**When:** Thursday 7\textsuperscript{th} May 2015  
**Where:** Dublin Children Services Building  
Enable Ireland, Sandymount, Dublin 4.  

*No charge for attendance!*

The ever-popular equipment day, will include a supplier exhibition, followed by parallel information sessions on specific related topics, and finishing with the equipment evaluation sessions in the afternoon.

This year the equipment categories will be:  
- Manual Wheelchairs – Folding Frame  
- Standing Wheelchairs  
- Complex Custom Made Seating  
- Comfort Chairs

Service providers, equipment users, and those with a general interest in the area are welcome to attend.

_The leading Irish equipment suppliers are very supportive of this forum and we are looking forward to working with them once more on the day, and the networking opportunities this presents..._

**Attendance at this full day qualifies for CPD - 5.5 hours**

We would be most grateful if you could pass this information on to your colleagues and to others who you feel might be interested.

_N.B. Anyone interested in attending must inform Linda at:_  
**lwynne@enableireland.ie**  
or phone 01 2615926

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