



Disability Federation of Ireland

Call for Tenders

Project Title: Review of DFI's Health and Social Care Programme - Structures of Advisory Groups and Representation

Issue Date: 25 November 2025

Closing Date for Applications: 5 January 2026

Disability Federation of Ireland, DFI, invites tender submissions from suitably qualified candidates, to undertake a review of DFI's health and social care programme of work, including our advisory group structures and committee representation.

1. About the Disability Federation of Ireland, DFI

DFI is a national federation of organisations, bodies, and groups working to advance the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN CRPD.

Our pan-disability membership represents and supports people with physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological, neurodivergent, and psychosocial disabilities, as well as those with complex or multiple support needs and disabling conditions. Members include both service providers and advocacy organisations led by and for disabled people and their families.

As a federation, DFI is committed to collaboration with our members, the HSE, government, civil society, and other key stakeholders to drive the full implementation of the UN CRPD across Irish society.

2. Project Background

With DFI's commitment to enhancing the sustainability, quality, and impact of disability services across the sector, a central focus of our work is amplifying the voices of member organisations to the HSE, government departments, and other key stakeholders. At the same time, we are fostering collaboration to build a cohesive and effective national disability movement.

This mission is partly advanced through our Health and Social Care Programme, which has expanded significantly during the most recent Strategic Planning cycle. As DFI prepares to enter a new Strategic Plan, it is timely to ensure that this growth is underpinned by robust internal capacity. In addition, this work is framed against a changing disability and health service landscape. This includes the development in the HSE of six health regions, a new national human rights strategy for disabled people (2025) and the movement of disability policy from the Department of Health to the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Therefore, we are seeking to review the current structures and approach of the programme, to assess not only capacity but effectiveness and process.

The Health and Social Care Programme is made up of the following key components with a significant amount involving member engagement, relationship building and management. It:

- Facilitates structured consultation and direct representation to key stakeholders.
- Representation on external committees which is largely through member organisation facilitated representation. Work in relation to this includes recruitment of member organisation representatives; providing ongoing support to member representatives as they sit on regional and national statutory committees, underpinned by an organisation policy and procedure.

- Manages DFI's structure of member groups which includes thematic advisory groups and networks. This facilitates transparent communication between DFI representatives and member organisations.
- Facilitates robust channels of communication and engagement with members; ensuring the transfer of knowledge and information between member organisations and their lived experience of disability to inform our advocacy.
- Engages members to identify and agree annual priorities of the DFI Health and Social Care Advocacy Programme.
- Provides expert input to policy submissions and responses to live and ad hoc calls for consultation.

Of note is the growing level of representation to the six health region structures.

International and national government policy informs the context for this programme of work. This includes regard for the UN CRPD, implementation of Sláintecare and the developing Health Regions, the HSE Corporate Plan, the HSE National Service Plan and the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People (2025).

3. Project Objectives

The purpose of this review is to evaluate the processes and impact of DFI's Health and Social Care Programme, helping to guide its ongoing development. It aims to identify how the programme can continue to deliver meaningful value and impact for DFI and its member organisations as both the programme and DFI's membership grow.

Specifically, the review will examine:

- How effectively the programme represents members' priorities and engages with external structures and identify the strengths of its current design.
- Where gaps exist in meeting the programme's objectives.
- What process improvements are needed, with particular attention to the advisory group structure, member engagement, and representation.
- The resources and capacity currently available to deliver the programme, and what will be required for future development within the broader health and social care context beyond DFI.
- Priority areas for development within the programme's existing structure, with a focus on maximising value for members and supporting the delivery of DFI's new strategic plan.
- Recommendations to enhance the programme's ability to sustain and scale, ensuring members benefit from greater influence, stronger representation, and improved support.

3.1 Stakeholders

The main point of contact for this piece of work will be DFI's Director of Advocacy. In addition, engagement will be provided with DFI senior management and other relevant staff including health and social care programme members; DFI's Health Advocacy Manager, Membership Manager and Communication Manager, member organisations and health and social care programme representatives.

It may be feasible also to engage with external stakeholders to assess the impact of the programme on external advocacy and representative work.

3.2 Key Tasks

The successful contractor will deliver the review through the following phases:

Phase 1: Inception and Scoping

- Consult with DFI Health and Social Care team and key stakeholders.
- Confirm methodology, scope, and priorities.
- Agree milestones, deliverables, and reporting arrangements.

Deliverable: An inception report confirming scope, methodology, and work plan.

Phase 2: Assessment and Analysis

- Review of DFI's policy and protocol and internal systems of member engagement and processes of advocacy which supports the health and social care programme specifically on member organisation representation, consultation and advocacy.
- Consider the structure of the health and social care programme.
- Engage with relevant stakeholders to capture experiences and impact of engagement in the programme.
- Identify gaps and/or inefficiencies.
- Benchmarking against comparable organisations/programmes.
- Analysis of current and projected demands linked to programme growth.

Deliverable: A comprehensive written report detailing findings from the review.

Phase 3: Recommendations

- Develop evidence-based, actionable recommendations to sustain and grow the programme with enhancing effectiveness at its centre.
- Identify options to address gaps and strengthen capacity.
- Consider both short-term adjustments and longer-term structural requirements.

Deliverables: (i) A set of clear, evidence-based recommendations for optimising impact and effectiveness, including looking at internal structures and resourcing. (ii) A final presentation of key findings and recommendations.

3.3 Project Timeline

It is expected that this review will be completed and presented to DFI Management within 12 weeks from project commencement date.

Interim progress reports will be required at agreed milestones.

4. Application Requirements

The successful contractor will demonstrate:

- Proven expertise in undertaking similar projects.
- Strong analytical, facilitation, and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent written communication and report preparation abilities.
- In-depth knowledge of the Irish health and social care landscape.

Proposals should include:

- A detailed methodology and approach to the review.
- Relevant experience and examples of similar completed projects.
- A proposed project timeline aligned with the requirements set out above.
- A detailed budget and pricing schedule (inclusive of VAT).
- Details of the proposed project team, including roles, qualifications, and relevant experience. CV of main applicant.

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to an interview or presentation as part of the evaluation process. Final proposals will be assessed against the following weighted criteria:

Quality and robustness of proposed methodology and approach	30%
Relevant experience and track record in similar projects	25%
Knowledge and understanding of the Irish health and social care landscape	20%
Value for money (clarity and justification of budget)	15%
Capacity and expertise of the proposed project team	10%

5. Budget

The maximum budget available to support this review shall not exceed €8,000 excluding VAT. Expressions of interest exceeding this amount shall not be considered.

6. Closing Date and Contact

The closing date for receipt of expressions of interest is 5 January 2026

For further information, or to submit an expression of interest, please contact: Emer Begley, DFI Director of Advocacy, emergbegley@disability-federation.ie.