

- Invest in the Fund for Students with Disabilities to support part-time students in Irish Further Education and Higher Education sector.[9]
- Increase numbers of National Educational Psychological Service, NEPS, psychologists by 20 to progressively achieve target of 238, at a cost of €1.6m.[10]
- Introduce an Assistive Technology, AT, Passport at a cost of €1.5m. Establish the Transport Support Scheme to replace the Mobility Allowance.
- Include funding to address pay restoration for sector 39 organisations not included in the 2019 process.

The actions listed above are a reminder that every part of government, not just the Department of Health, must be involved in the goal of full equality.

Ireland must work to build a society where people who have a disability are treated equally. People with disabilities should be able to get on with their lives just as others do. This is the real intention of the UN CRPD.



9. As stated in the Programme for a Partnership Government, this also includes the cost of improved administration.

10. The AT Passport can support Assistive Technology users to access the training and supports they need across education, work and independent living.



Call for a budget that responds to the needs of ALL people with disabilities



DFI Pre-Budget Submission 2020

90% of the health disability budget is supporting 5% of the 643,131 people with disabilities. Recognising this reality, the Government must invest strongly in services across all its Departments to enable people with disabilities to live independently.

For people with disabilities the recession continues as these facts starkly illustrate:

- 24% of adults with a disability live in consistent poverty, compared to 26% in 2016, 22% in 2015, and 11% in 2011[1].
- 31% of working age people with a disability were at work, compared to 71% of those without a disability[2].
- People with disabilities capable of living independent lives are trapped in their homes, residential homes or nursing homes due to a lack of Personal Assistant, PA, and Home Support hours.
- Not enough money is being spent to support people to live independently in their community. Only 0.3% of all people with disabilities get a Personal Assistant Service.[3]

This will be the legacy of this Government unless major issues are addressed in Budget 2020.

The total imbalance in spending must be faced. There must be an investment in vital community supports so that the remaining 95% of people with disabilities can experience the equality promised in the ratification of the UN CRPD.

To see some improvements to the living situation of people with disabilities, Budget 2020 must address:

1. www.cso.ie, 2017 SILC data, based on the principal economic status, of people not at work due to illness or disability.
2. Watson, D., Lawless, M., and Maitre, B. (2017) Employment transitions among people with a disability in Ireland
3. HSE National Service Plan 2018

1. Income

People with disabilities have a higher risk of poverty. This is particularly true for people who rely on social welfare including Disability Allowance. Until recommendations are available from Government's research[4] into the additional cost of having disability in Ireland, the Disability Allowance payment should be increased by €20 per week.

Benchmarking of social welfare payments should only happen once a minimum social welfare floor is established. The benchmark should be set against the Minimum Essential Standard of Living.

2. Health and Social Care

Commit to a Multi-Annual Investment Programme of €211m each year for five years 2020-2024 for community services for people with disabilities.[5] This is to include:

- €12m for Personal Assistant Service and Home Supports[6].
- Invest €15m in Respite Services including for the support of people with physical, sensory, neurological disabilities.
- Invest €13.5m in adult therapy services in 2020, and in 2021, a total of €27m.
- Ring-fence funding to give effect to the recommendations of the Taskforce on Personalised Budgets.
- Recruit a minimum of 300 therapy staff for children's services over the next four years.

4. This programme, in keeping with the Articles of the UNCRPD, should include funding for: Personal Budgets, Residential Supports, Personal Assistant Services, Home Supports, Other community services and supports, Day services, Respite Care and Adult Therapies

5. This supports the Homecare Coalitions Pre Budget ask of €110m which will cover home supports for older persons and people with disabilities

6. Based on Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2018 <https://bit.ly/2Zvpbxo>

In addition, in 2020:

- Invest an additional €7m in post-acute rehabilitation beds, rehabilitation supports, and community supports.
- €4.5m to implement the demonstrator project in HSE Community Health Organisations 6 and 7 as the first step in delivery of the Implementation Framework for the National Neurorehabilitation Strategy 2019-2021.
- €2m investment in neurology services to address growing waiting lists and unacceptable waiting periods for neurology service.

3. Community Services and Supports

DFI is calling for the introduction of:

A cross-departmental package of community supports.

Provision of a multi-annual investment programme to fund these supports. An investment of €50m to begin to provide better community supports across departments with responsibility for education, training, employment, transport, housing and assistive technology. This includes:

- Commit a minimum of 7.5% of all social housing in 2020 to provide appropriate housing for people on the social housing waiting lists because of disability.[7]
- Increase funding for Housing Adaptation Grants by €28.38m.[8] Provide a minimum of €100m funding for the Capital Assistance Scheme in 2020.
- Fund and appoint Disability Experts at Education and Training Board, ETB, level as the lead and support person for students with disabilities at a cost of €1.5m.

7. To restore the funding to 2010 levels per Minister Eoghan Murphy, 11th June 2019, response to PQs [23645/19] and [23646/19] <https://bit.ly/2Xn3X7u>

8. This is in line with recommendation 10 of the HEA's review of the Fund. <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/10/HEA-Review-of-the-Fund-for-Students-with-Disabilities.pdf>