

# Crumbling Disability Services

## DFI Pre-Budget Submission 2018



**This year the UN CRPD is to be ratified. Substantial resources need to be allocated to people with disabilities in Budget 2018. Services and supports are crumbling.**



### Why?

Many people with disabilities rely on social welfare payments for their income because they face barriers trying to access work. Evidence shows they have not seen any benefits from the recovery, and so austerity continues for them. <sup>1</sup>

### The facts are:

- 132,000 people with disabilities were living in consistent poverty in 2015. The consistent poverty rate rose from 14% to 22% for people with disabilities in 2015.
- The disposable income of people with disabilities fell by 7.4%, a drop of €1,047 between 2010 and 2015. <sup>2</sup> This effectively means that people's income is down by €20 a week.
- 31% of working-age people with a disability were at work compared to 71% of those without a disability. <sup>3</sup>
- The Disability Allowance is €193 a week. The same as Jobseekers' Allowance, but that is a temporary support for someone looking for a job. Many people with disabilities are relying on the Disability Allowance as a long-term payment.

1. Between 2010 – 2015 people with a disability were more likely to exit than enter employment. For those without a disability, the rate of job entry picked up in the recovery period and the rate of exit dropped. However, there was little sign of a recovery for people with a disability by 2015.

2. [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie). Median equivalised real disposable income for 2010 was €14,184, and €13,137 in 2015.

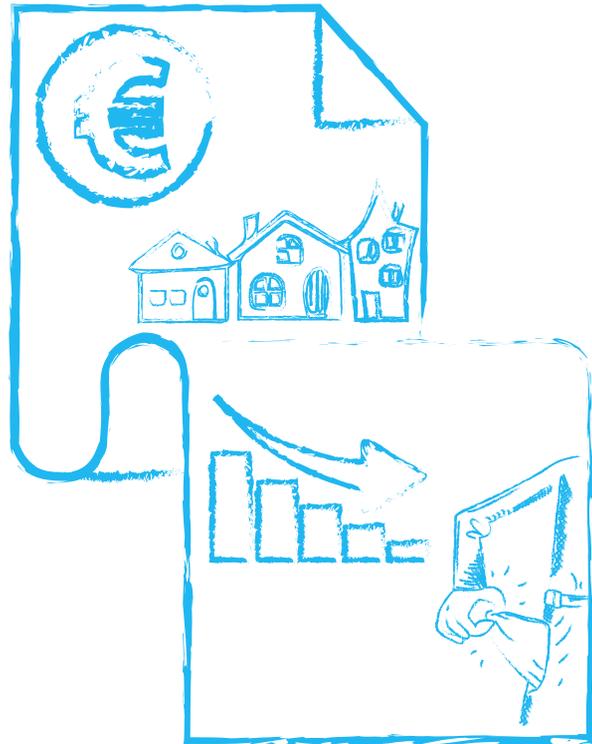
3. Watson, D., Lawless, M., and Maitre, B. (2017) Employment transitions among people with disabilities in Ireland. An Analysis of the Quarterly National Household Survey.

# Living a Budgetary Nightmare

A person with a disability living in Ireland in 2017 struggles every week to meet their bills. As you, our policy makers, prepare Budget 2018 consider the impossible budgetary position of people with disabilities.

A mixture of inadequate financial support and sparse community supports continue to rob many people with disabilities of any quality of life.

In order to see some improvements to the living situation of people with disabilities, Budget 2018 must address:



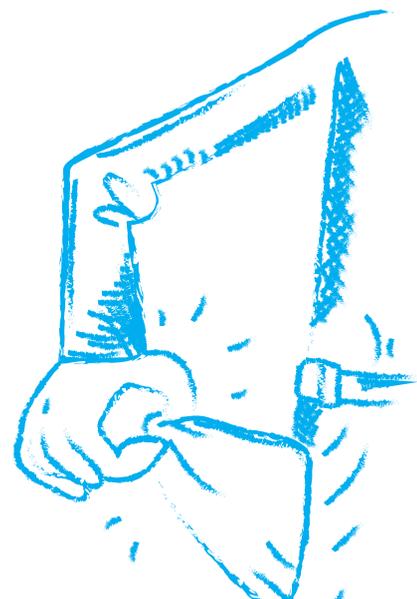
## 1. Income

## 2. Community Services and Supports

# We need:

## Income

Increase Disability Allowance (DA) by €20 a week to provide an adequate minimum income that guards against poverty. This as an interim measure; DFI also recommend further increases in DA over the next few years to offset the decreased purchasing power of people with disabilities.

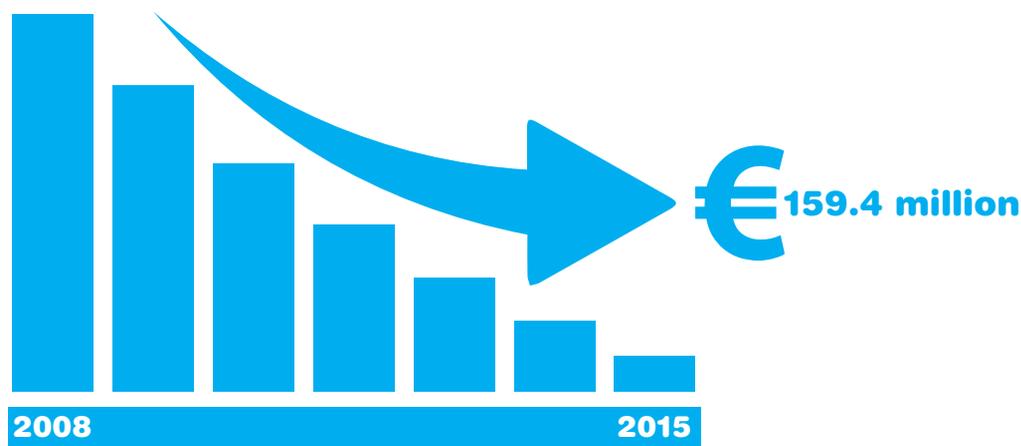


# Community Services and Supports

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.

This is desperately needed as there was a reduction of €159.4 million, or 9.4%, between 2008 and 2015 in spending on disability health services alone. While funding went down demand went up at a time of overall cuts to health spending.



## Health, we need:

An investment of €50m in community support packages that allow a person with a disability / illness to remain living in their own home, including, for example:

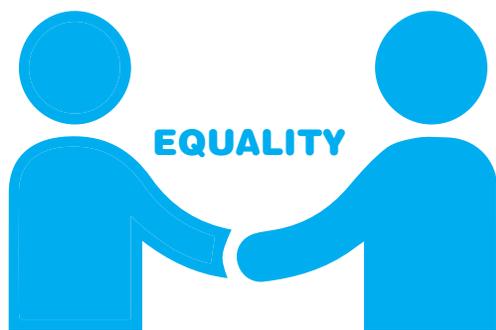
- Personal Assistants
- Home supports
- Home Help
- Therapy services
- Community neuro-rehabilitation services
- Public health nursing



# Other Community Services, we need:

- An investment of €50m to begin to provide better community supports in education, training, employment, transport, assistive technology.
- €30m funding for the Housing Adaptation Grant scheme, and provide accessible housing for the 4,456 people with disabilities on social housing waiting lists. 4

Investing in community supports is cost effective, and is the 'right thing to do'. It keeps people out of residential centres 5 , and enables them to live in their own homes and in their communities.



If this is done the government will have begun the process of implementing the UN CRPD. This investment along with the implementation of legislation and cultural change, make up the 'Triple Lock' Ireland requires to bring about equality for people with disabilities.

Budget 2018 must be the budget to restore dignity and a quality of life to people with disabilities through reversing the impact of austerity, as part of the State's ratification of the Convention this year.

4. The number of households with a social housing need, with household member(s) having an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual disability, raised from 3,919 in 2013 to 4,456 in 2016, an increase of 13.7%. The Housing Agency (2016) Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2016 <https://www.housingagency.ie/Housing/media/Media/Publications/Summary-of-Social-Housing-Assessment-Needs-2016.pdf>, p.15.

5. In 2015, there were 1047 younger people with disabilities living in nursing homes. Source: HSE data.

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