

Family Forum Minutes
Thursday 13th March 2025. Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre

Who was present: Participants



John McCusker (Family Forum Facilitator), Olive Gormley, Children's Disability Network Manager CDNT 6, (CDNM), Frances Fitzell (Children's Services Manager), Ashling Doyle (Administration)

Family Representative:

Chair: John McCusker

Minutes: Ashling Doyle

What happened: Agenda



Introduction

John introduced himself, and his role as an independent facilitator. He also introduced Olive Gormley as Children's Disability Network Manager, Frances Fitzell as Children's Service Manager, Ashling Doyle Administrator & Barbora Svecova as Family Forum Representative to the families.

Family Forum Facilitator update

John explained the purpose of the Family Forum, which is to provide a supportive network for parents to discuss challenges and receive information in a safe environment.

The group includes one family rep, - Barbora, who represents local Family Forums and sit on a regional Family Forum with fourteen members.

The regional Family Forum devises strategies to improve services through better communication and engagement with other services.

Two family reps from the regional group sit on the governance group, which includes senior managers and stakeholders, to bring concerns and actions back to the group.

CDNM update

Olive welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the Family Forum.

Caseload: Olive updated the families with our current caseload of 527 families 374 of these are active and we have 153 families on the waiting list.

She informed families that when they become active, they will receive an Individual Family Support Plan and then they are listed for some of the supports they require, including individual and group interventions, training and other resources.

We have now activated all of our 2021 and will start to activate our 2022 waitlist in the coming months.

	<p>The waitlist can be affected by staffing issues, AON's, children transferring in as active from another CDNT and also children under 12 months are activated on referral.</p> <p>Vacancies: Our current vacancies are 1 x staff grade SLT and 2 x staff grade OT. A new grade recruitment drive recently launched, interviews will open in April.</p> <p>Waitlist Screening Clinic: We have been providing a screening clinic to Service Users on our waitlist. This is a once-off session to discuss any issues and to identify specific needs.</p> <p>Individual interventions are ongoing alongside AON'S, team assessments, school and home visits.</p> <p>Current Group interventions (as listed on update):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Support Sessions: These are run by our Social Workers and are currently running for February March and May. • Decider Group: This is run for secondary school students ranging from 3rd – 5th year. This is currently ongoing in Coláiste Chill Mhantáin we have 15 service users attending. • Visual Workshop: We had 7 families attend, in this group we show parents what visuals are, how to make them and the benefits of them to support individuals with special needs.
What is helpful for us?	Please share any reports you might have had done privately, also updating us with any changes in your address, phone number or email address.
Family Representative	<p>Message from Family representative: <i>I would like to thank everyone on behalf of the Family Forum Representatives for coming to the meeting and sharing your concerns and questions. Thank you also for the valuable feedback on the service update provided by the CDNM. Please make contact if you have any further questions, suggestions or need any clarification about the work of the Regional Family Forum.</i></p> <p>Barbora Svecova, Family Forum Representative.</p>
Q & A	<i>See additional notes below (Table 2)</i>
Workshop - Format & Content of Service update	<p>The families attending the meeting were asked to review the format and content of what is included in the <i>Service Update</i> (document sent to families with Family Forum invite).</p> <p>Suggestions and queries from parents –</p> <p>Group interventions section: It would be beneficial to clarify that these are for active children and families.</p> <p>Suggestion that slides from groups be sent on to parents on the waiting list</p>

	<p>Suggestion that an alert be sent when there are new materials on the Enable Ireland website/YouTube channel. Enable Ireland - YouTube</p> <p>Families said that text is more responsive than emails.</p> <p>Discussion re figures on appointments not attended – is there a reminder sent out and do you call other families to offer these missed appointments.</p> <p><i>We are currently not routinely sending out reminders via text as we do not have the amenities to do so automatically. We do however send reminders to families that have requested this and before some group interventions where resources allow.</i></p> <p><i>Where we have enough notice that families can't attend an appointment, we do offer these out to other families.</i></p> <p><i>We are in the process of getting a new I T system rolled out. This will allow us to send reminder texts. We are hoping we will have this up and running for the end of the year 2025.</i></p> <p>Are there consequences to not attending appointments? <i>There is a policy regarding engagement that is followed:</i></p> <p>National policy for Children's Disability Network Teams on family engagement and attendance</p>
Next Steps	<p>The date for the next Family Forum is TBC.</p>

Table 2

Q & A Section <i>Family members present were given the opportunity to write down questions they had and these were directed to management for answering</i>	
Question	Response
How do we access workshops?	The workshops and groups are for our active Service Users, we do offer them out to our waitlist if there is availability to do so.
What is available when we are on the waitlist?	We are offering the Waitlist Screening Clinics as a once off appointment and advice to children & families on our waitlist.
Can you run the Parent Support Sessions for families on the waitlist?	CDNM is going to bring this back to the team and speak to the Social Workers who run this group
Can a resource list be sent to families while we are on the waiting list?	Currently we send our Handbook out to families that have been referred and accepted into the CDNT.
Is there a Dietitian?	We have a dietitian that works two days a month with us. Your child will be referred to her when becoming active if there is requirement need.
Can we show interest in the screening clinic?	All children referred into us is placed on a list in date order of referral. In some circumstances we can prioritise based on needs.
How do we know what number we are on the waiting list?	You can call the office on 0404 32092 and we can source that information for you.