

Family Forum Minutes 27th November at 3pm on MS Teams

Who was present:

- 2 family members
- Family Representative: Catherine Rossiter
- Independent Facilitator: John McCusker
- Children's Disability Network Manager: Margaret McGrath
- Children Services Manager: Michelle Carroll

What happened: Agenda



Introduction	Family Forum Facilitator provided a brief update on work achieved by the Family Representation Group over 2025. This included the development of an information video, support with developing the CDNT web pages, three forums per CDNT, representation on the Regional Governance Group.
Family Forum Representative	<p>Catherine shared her experience as a Parent Representative for the past three years. She discussed her work with the Family Forum Representative Group including developing an information video about Family Forums.</p> <p>Catherine highlighted the launch of the Children's Disability Network Team 1 (CDNT1) website, which will serve as a hub for updates and video content for families.</p>
Election of Family Representatives	<p>Catherine is stepping down after three years. John and Margaret thanked her for her invaluable contributions.</p> <p>The forum is now seeking two new Family Representatives. The role involves attending meetings, gathering feedback from parents, and working with the facilitator. The time commitment is approximately 2-3 hours per month.</p> <p>Included with the minutes is further information on the role and the expression of interest form. Interested candidates can get in touch if they wish to discuss it further cdnt1Sandymount@enableireland.ie</p> <p>Further planning for 2026 forum meetings will be held until a replacement is appointed.</p>
CDNM update	CDNM Margaret McGrath provided an update on the work of the team and staffing based on the information leaflet sent to parents.

	<p>Waitlist: Children and young people on the waitlist with referral dates in 2020 and 2021 have all been offered active services over 2025.</p> <p>Discharges: Over 100 children have been discharged from the service between January and October.</p> <p>New Data Management System: This is being implemented in all CDNTs nationally. It is due to go live in CDNT1 this week. The system will also feature text messaging reminders for parents about workshops and appointments.</p> <p>Staffing: Currently six vacancies on the team compared to twelve at the same time last year. Graduate programs have been successful; all 2024 graduates still with the team. The team is growing its number of senior staff.</p>
Parent Feedback & Questions	<p>A parent shared their son's experience of attending the 'Teen Group' in August. They noted that the group made their son feel heard and understood, and it was the first time he felt a sense of belonging with other children who share his experiences.</p> <p>Parent commented on the significant improvements seen in staff retention since the configuration changes.</p> <p>John thanked the parents for their input and emphasized the importance of these forums in ensuring families feel heard.</p>
Next Steps & Feedback	<p>A planning session for the next year's Family Forum will take place on 1st December between CDNM's and Family Representatives.</p>
Website Link	<p>Dublin and South East CDNT Home Page</p> <p>CDNT1 unique page CDNT 1 - Sandymount Dublin and South East CDNT</p>
HSE New Information Service	<p>As part of the Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023-2026 Disability Services for Children and Young People, the HSE is creating this new information service on https://www2.hse.ie/babies-children/disabilities to provide evidence informed, accessible information and resources for children and young people with disabilities and their families</p> <p>The HSE want to get feedback from families and staff early on in the project, so we are making the first version available with 40+ resources on the following topics:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication – Tips to support speech, language, and interaction • Emotion & Sensory Regulation – Calming strategies and coping tools • Life Skills – Toilet training, handwriting, and independence skills • Play – Sensory play and activity ideas • School – Preparing for pre-school and building confidence <p>Feedback can be provided in several ways. There will be a feedback form at the bottom of each page on the website. The team will also be running focus groups with staff and families early in 2026. We encourage staff and families to visit https://www2.hse.ie/babies-children/disabilities and provide their feedback to help us develop and improve this new service for families and children</p>
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