Children's Disability Network Team

Integrated Health Areas of

Carlow / Kilkenny/ South Tipperary and Waterford / Wexford

Welcome to our Service Information Booklet

CRC
Central Remedial Clinic

enable ireland
Disability Services
Life With No Limits

Developed Nov 2025

Children’s Disability Network Team

The vision for Children’s Disability services

- > Easy access to the services children need
- > Fairness in providing services
- > Families, health services and education working together to support children in developing their potential

The lead agencies managing Children’s Disability Network Teams in Carlow Kilkenny Waterford Wexford South Tipperary are:

CRC
Central Remedial Clinic

enable ireland
Disability Services
Life With No Limits

Children's Disability Network Team

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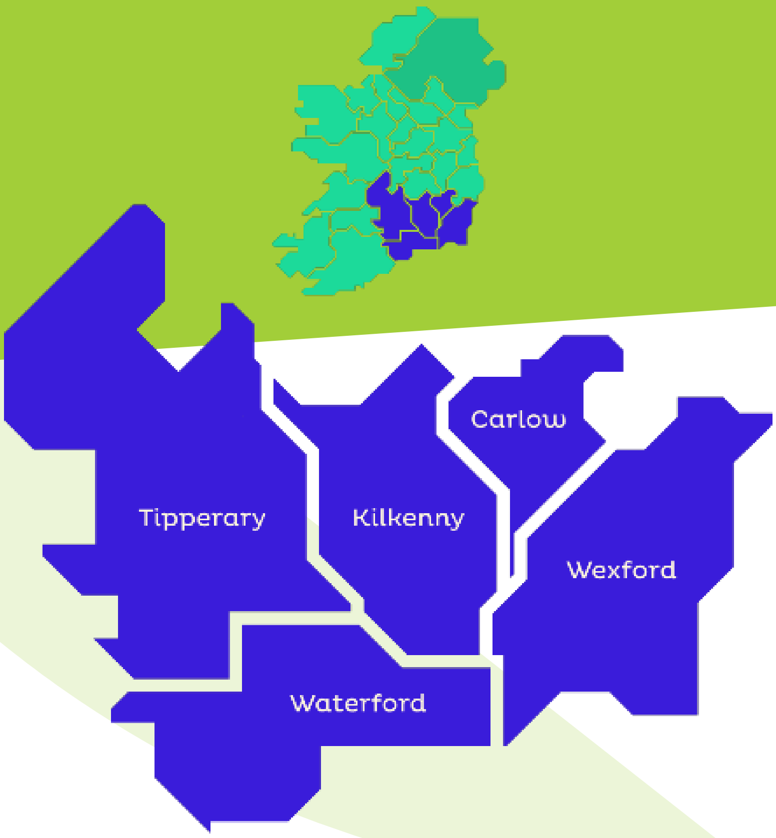
Please keep
this booklet
for future
reference



Children's Disability Network Teams

The role of the CDNT is to provide assessment, support and intervention for children with complex disability needs

How to Find Your Local CDNT

Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) work in a defined geographic area. This area is based on the child's home address.

The HSE Area finder is a tool available to you which identifies the catchment area of your CDNT and local HSE services. If you change address, you can use the HSE Area Finder website to identify your new CDNT if moving outside your current Network
www.hseareafinder.ie

About this booklet

You may have been directed to this booklet because your child, or the child you care for, has been accepted into your local Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) in the area of Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford or South Tipperary. This booklet tells you how these 12 CDNTs work.

Each CDNT will endeavour to work together with you and your child to support his or her needs. This Service Information Booklet gives you information about CDNTs and the range of services that may be available.

We hope you find this booklet easy to understand and helpful to you as a family. If you would like help using this booklet or have any questions about the information in it, please contact your CDNT. The contact details of each CDNT can be found on our website, www.dublinandsoutheastcdnt.ie. We would also encourage you to visit the News & Events and Supports & Resources sections there.

Who is on the team?

> The core disciplines in a CDNT are:

- Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Psychology
- Nursing
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Social Work
- Dietetics
- Administrative support
- Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM)

Teams may also have access to:

> Behaviour Support Specialists
> Family Support Workers (FSWs) or Social Care Workers
> Therapy Assistants (TAs)

How We Work

Our way of working is called family centered practice. Family centered practice is an empowering approach that focuses on the whole family and not solely on the child requiring support. It recognises that the wellbeing and development of the child is dependent on the wellbeing of the family as a whole. Family centered practice ensures that supports provided are determined by family priorities, with the guidance of the CDNT.

You know your child best and you are the most important member of the team. Our focus is to build on the skills you already use to support your child's development. Our team is an interdisciplinary team. This means that different team members work together. We may work with your child separately or together depending on what is needed at different times for your child.

What can you expect from our service?

The team members will work together in an interdisciplinary way where possible, during periods of assessment, when developing an Individual Family Support Plan, and when delivering group or individual intervention.

Your child's health, safety and wellbeing are our highest priority and we will respond to these needs as quickly as resources allow. The CDNT welcomes any new or additional information that you may wish to provide regarding your child and endeavours to support you and your child as best they can. CDNTs continue to experience a high level of vacant posts which has a significant impact on what and how services are offered.

Key Contact

You may be assigned a key contact at certain points of your child's time with the team. The role of the key contact is to provide a consistent link between you and the team, and to inform you about processes and pathways for your child. Queries from families without a key contact can be directed to a clinician who is working with you at the time, or through the administrative staff.

Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP)

An IFSP is a written plan created with the child/young person present where appropriate, the family and a member / members of the team. It outlines desired outcomes and services to support the achievement of goals. The IFSP includes:

- The family's concerns and priorities
- Goals agreed with the family
- How the team/family/others will work towards achieving these goals
- How achievement of the goals will be measured

About the IFSP

- Ensures family are partners in the process
- Focuses on the child and family's priorities and functional goals
- Reviews previous goals set and progress in the child's development
- Outlines how the team and supports within the family and community are going to help achieve identified goals

Your Family Goals may focus on things like:

- Your life and family experience (e.g. eating breakfast in the morning, going to the supermarket, visiting grandparents, going for a walk together outdoors)
- Your child's developmental and learning needs (e.g. exploring and playing with toys, communicating needs and wants, cycling a bicycle)
- Your child's health and wellbeing (e.g. helping your child to cope with change, toilet training, for your child to sleep in their own bed)
- Activities in your community (e.g. to play with a friend in school or to join a local club)

It is important to remember that big goals can be achieved through success of lots of smaller goals. Sometimes parents aren't sure of the immediate goals for their child or how to break down long term goals into more manageable goals. Members of the team can guide you through this by giving you the information you need to make informed decisions.

These goals are reviewed on a regular basis to see what's going well, what has worked or not worked for your family, and what's most important for your family at this time.

When problem solving together, the first solution doesn't always go as planned. However, everything you try will give more information and help us to learn, adapt, and come up with a plan that works best for you and your family.

My child has been accepted to a CDNT – what happens next?

Once your child is accepted to a Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT), their name will be put on a waiting list. There is no set waiting time. The waiting time varies across the teams. This depends on the demand and staffing levels in different locations.

You can contact your CDNT if you have any queries, or if there is a change in your child's circumstances which you have significant concerns about. Please also let us know if any of your contact details change.

The CDNT provides support in different ways, some of which are described on page 10 of this booklet. For example, you may be invited to join a group or attend a workshop, depending on your child's needs. We encourage you to attend these groups or workshops, and we usually ask for your feedback at the end. We value your feedback – it helps to improve how we deliver services.

Additionally based on information received by the CDNT at the time of referral, a team member may be in contact to support with a specific health or safety need.

When your child's file is opened, a team member will arrange to meet you and your child. At this meeting, we will explain what we do and what it means for you and your child. You will also have a chance to ask any questions.

The team will work closely with you using a wide range of services and supports. The team members you meet, and how often you meet them, will depend on your child's needs and goals. This will be discussed with you and your child when your Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) is being designed, or when other intervention is being offered.

The CDNT will endeavor to work closely with other people and organisations who are involved in your child's care, development and everyday life.

Intervention

All intervention is aimed at supporting you to help your child at home, at school and in the community. The Individual Family Support Plan or information we receive about your child will identify the interventions that your child requires. As a team we may offer supports in a variety of formats, depending on the needs and goals identified by your family.

How is intervention delivered?

- In person, by telephone or online
- Interdisciplinary therapy e.g. the SLT, OT or PT might work together during a session with your child
- Group therapy for children, or children and parents together
- Workshops for parents/carers, family members, or teachers and SNAs
- Individual therapy
- Recommendations for home
- Recommendations for school
- School consultation
- Liaising with the NEPS psychologists who provide school based psychological support

You may be asked to join in during your child's sessions so that you can support your child in their home environment. We may give you home programmes with activities to follow up on skills practiced during the sessions.
Due to limited resources, we are not able to provide access to all services immediately. However, we will work with you to provide you with some general supports whilst waiting for services.

How often will intervention take place?

The frequency of intervention depends on the needs of your child and the availability of resources. Interventions may be followed by a break. Following any intervention it is important that each child gets time to put new skills into practice.

Progress of goals identified in the IFSP will be monitored by the key contact or other team members involved with your child, and through information shared with your CDNT, to determine if and when further intervention is required.

What kind of supports do the CDNT offer?

We use a three-pronged approach to providing services:

Universal Supports (information sessions, talks and workshops)

Universal supports are designed to support all children and young people. They are offered to all families receiving services, as well as families waiting for services, when available. An example of a universal support is:

- Benefits and Entitlements Webinar

Targeted Supports (group work)

Targeted supports are designed to be provided in partnership with others. Groups are for children who have similar needs. Bringing children together in groups is more fun for them and they can learn from each other.

Group work is also where parents learn together about how best to work with their child to support their development. It brings together parents who have common challenges, and gives them a chance to share their ideas and experiences. Examples of group work include:

- Early Bird Training Programme for parents of children who have been identified as autistic
- Hanen programmes for developing communication
- Emotional Regulation Workshop
- Sensory Workshop

Individual Supports (one-to-one work)

Individual supports are implemented when a goal is best met through working directly with a team member e.g. difficulties with postural management, mobility, and eating, drinking or swallowing. Not all children with complex needs arising from a disability will need individual supports.

Universal Supports for needs which many children with disabilities and their families share

Targeted Supports for needs which some children with disabilities and their families share

Individual Supports for specific needs of the child and family

All these approaches have equal value. Your child’s needs may be met using just one approach, or they might benefit from a mix of two or three.

The team will consider what supports are needed, and they will recommend universal, targeted, or individual supports based on your child’s needs and goals.

Do the teams work with other services?

We may sometimes need to link with other services involved in your child’s care and development – for example, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Paediatricians, schools, and hospitals. If we need to do this, we will make sure you’re included, and we encourage you to let us know about any other services involved in your child’s care.

Understanding the CDNT Model

If you would like to read more about the CDNT model of care you may wish to refer to the following documents:-

1. National Policy on Access to Services for Children & Young People with Disability & Developmental Delay (May 2025): https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/national-policy-on-access-to-services-for-disabilities-and-developmental-delay.pdf
2. CHO Governance of Children’s Disability Network Team Services (September 2023): https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/community-healthcare-organisation-governance-of-children-s-disability-network-service.pdf
3. Roadmap for Service Improvement 2023-2026: Disability Services for Children and Young People https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/disability/roadmap-for-service-improvement-2023-2026.pdf
4. Progressing Towards Outcomes-Focused Family-Centered Practice: An Operational Framework (HSE 2020): https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/progressing-disability/pds-programme/documents/progressing-towards-outcomes-focused-family-centred-practice.pdf

Getting to know each other

We recognise that each family is different and each family is unique. Supports and services within the CDNT will be as responsive and flexible as possible to meet your family's needs.

We may ask questions about your family's culture, values and beliefs so that we know what is important to you and make sure we are respectful.

Other supports such as interpreters and translating information can be provided to help your family and the team to communicate with each other effectively. Please ask us if you need an interpreter or information translated so we can organise this before visits or appointments.

We can work with families in different places such as within the home, preschool or school settings, in the community, or in the clinic. You can tell us if you have a preference for which location works best for your family and we will accommodate you where possible. We also recognise that many families can find it hard to access services if transport is an issue. Please let us know if this is a worry or concern for you and together we can make a plan around this.

Participation of Families

Families play a key role in shaping how Children's Disability Services are delivered. Each of the 12 CDNTs in the South East hosts a Family Forum, typically twice a year, where families can share ideas, ask questions, and give feedback to help improve services. These forums are supported by up to two elected Family Representatives per team —parents or guardians who volunteer to represent the views of families at a local and regional level. Two of these Family Representatives also act as Regional Family Representatives and attend Regional Governance Group meetings.

Family Representatives help ensure your feedback is heard and shared with the CDNT, and with Regional Services as appropriate, but they do not deal with individual cases or clinical matters. Their role is to support communication between families and the service and to bring forward common concerns and suggestions raised by parents.

If you would like to attend a Family Forum or get in touch with your local Family Representatives, please contact your CDNT for the relevant contact details.

How can you help us to help your child?

For your child to get the best possible service, we ask you to;

- Attend all appointments and sessions: You and your child must attend all sessions. We realise that there will be times when you and your child will be unable to attend. If this is the case, please contact the CDNT as soon as possible to cancel and to arrange for another appointment. You may have to wait a number of weeks for another appointment.

- Get involved: This means attending all individual and group appointments / training / workshops offered by the team, working with the team in identifying goals for your child, planning the steps needed to achieve these goals and carrying out home programmes given by the team. The best results are achieved when skills are practiced routinely during daily activities.

- Prepare your child for appointments: This may involve giving them a snack beforehand, altering nap times, bringing a favourite toy and allowing adequate time to get to appointments.

- Contact us if you have any new or additional information that you may wish to provide regarding your child.

- Share with us if your child is accessing any private therapy. This ensures that all relevant therapies compliment each other where possible. The CDNT will continue to offer your child interventions as available, and your service provision will not be impacted by accessing private services.

- Please do not attend appointments if you or your child are unwell.

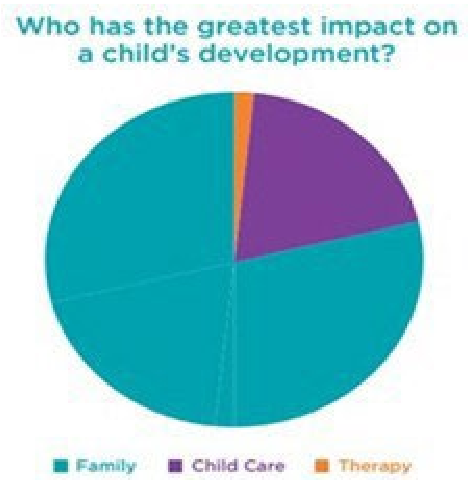
- Please share with the team your feedback from any intervention offered.

Remember to visit the website www.dublinandsoutheastcdnt.ie for more CDNT information and supports

Building everyone's knowledge and skills

Your family, along with other important people in your child's life such as child care staff and teachers, spend the most time with your child. Building your knowledge, skills and confidence is much more effective and will have the biggest impact on your child's learning and development

Diagram: 3 year old – average week – family – up to 80 awake hours (up to 10 hours sleep per night), 20 hours in child care/ preschool and 1 hour of therapy



When parents or carers use a strategy with their own child it is three times more effective than when an early intervention worker uses the same strategy with that child.

"*….the effect size for parents' use of everyday activities as an early intervention was three times larger than that for practitioners' use of early intervention in everyday activities.*" *(Dunst 2007 p169)*

Adapted from Mahoney, G. (2010). Mahoney, G. (2012). The Parenting Model and Developmental Intervention: Implications for Parent Involvement. Keynote Address, National ECIA Conference, Canberra.

For families this means:

- All team members will start by finding out what you already know, what you have tried that works, and then working with you to achieve your family goals.
- They will use coaching (where they will talk you through the situation giving you suggestions in the moment) and modeling (e.g. showing you a specific strategy) to enable you to build your skills. Our team will do this through conversations over the phone, home visits, community visits, or in group interventions.
- Parent training and workshops happening within the team are also an opportunity to gain knowledge on different areas (e.g. toileting or communication) and to share skills and connect with other parents.

For preschool staff, school staff, and community partners this means:

We will use coaching, collaboration, and consultation to help staff in supporting the goals of your child at crèche, preschool, or school. This can happen on a one-to-one basis, through phone calls, preschool or school visits, and in a group setting through education / information sessions.

All of the relevant people supporting your child will be involved in looking at the issues and learning opportunities throughout your child's day. In this way, we identify a plan that works well for everyone and so will have the best outcomes for your child.

What if my child does not need the Children’s Disability Network Team service anymore?

If your child no longer needs the services of the CDNT they will be discharged from the service. This will be discussed with you and where appropriate your child may be referred to another service. If your child’s needs appear more complex in the future, referral to the CDNT can be considered again.

What happens if I move house to another area?

If you and your family change address, please inform the CDNT. If you and your family move out of the catchment area, our team will liaise with the CDNT linked with your new area and organise the transfer of your child’s file with your consent.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is very important to everyone on the team. We assure you that your personal information is treated with sensitivity.

There may be some situations where we are required by law to pass on information to the relevant authorities (e.g. Tusla or An Garda Síochána) as we have a duty to make sure that all the children we see are safe and protected from harm.

We must pass on information to the authorities if:

- There is evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected
- A child or family member tells us they intend to harm themselves or harm someone else

Consent

In line with the HSE National Consent Policy, parents/legal guardians have the right to give consent for their child under 16 years to receive assessment or intervention. A young person aged 16 or 17 years can consent to their own treatment intervention, but if they do not have the capacity to consent, their parents/legal guardians may give consent until the young person reaches the age of 18 years.

Should any service request information about your child from CDNT staff, we will ensure we have your consent before sharing this.

Comments, compliments and complaints

Your CDNT aims to provide high-quality health and social services. Please bring any comments, compliments and/or complaints you have to our attention.

As a first step, we ask you to share your feedback with or make your complaint to the Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM) of the team providing services to your family.
You will find contact details on our website, www.dublinandsoutheastcdnt.ie

If you decide you want to take a complaint further

If you decide you want to take your complaint further, please contact the lead agency managing your CDNT. The lead agency for each team is listed below

HSE CHO5 Disability Services Team
Lead Agency for CDNTs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7N, 8, 9, 10 and 11

Complaints procedure:
https://www2.hse.ie/complaints-feedback/
Email: yoursay@hse.ie

Central Remedial Clinic (CRC)
Lead Agency for CDNT 7S (Waterford South)

Complaints Procedure:
Email: haveyoursay@crc.ie

Enable Ireland
Lead Agency for CDNT 3 (Kilkenny)

Complaints procedure:
https://enableireland.ie/feedback-and-complaints