

**National Disability Inclusion Strategy: Phase 2 Consultation
*Submission by the Citizens Information Board (December 2015)***

**Introduction**

The Citizens Information Board welcomes the opportunity to respond to a second phase of the consultation on the new National Disability Inclusion Strategy. The Board notes that the purpose of Phase 2 of the consultation process is to identify and agree specific objectives under each of the themes identified from the Phase 1 Consultation.[[1]](#footnote-1)

While the CIB agrees broadly with the list of themes included and related objectives, we suggest the inclusion of two additional themes - *active social inclusion* and *implementing a rights-based approach*.

The submission suggests a number of additional objectives under the themes already listed and also identifies a number of objectives under the two additional themes proposed.

The CIB wishes to highlight at the outset what we see as a crucial need to break out the overall generic grouping *people with disabilities* into a number of sub-sets in order to more fully comprehend the multi-faceted and very heterogeneous nature of the population being referred to. This is required for three reasons:

1. People with disabilities are people first and foremost and their disability is a secondary factor;
2. The label ‘disability’ almost certainly masks the individual attributes of each person and their related support needs;
3. The reality that sometimes may be lost sight of is that many people with a disability do not suffer from any illness.

**Education**: **Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* Children are supported to achieve their full potential
* Transitions from one stage of education to the next are made easy through proper planning and involvement of everyone concerned – the family, the child or young person, the education service they are leaving and the one they are moving to.

***Education*:  *Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*The full integration of children/young persons with any type of disability into mainstream education is made happen through the availability of appropriately trained teachers and individually-tailored in-school supports.*

*Transition from second-level education to further education or training opportunities is planned for in an integrated and purposeful manner throughout.*

**Employment: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* Improved employment opportunities for people with disabilities
* Young people with disabilities leaving education get the opportunity to work and have a career
* People who become disabled are enabled to stay in work where they can
* It pays to take a job

***Employment*:  *Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*Proactive support is available to those people with disabilities who can and wish to progress into paid work to enable them to do so.*

*People with disabilities have access to all activation, training and employment support measures on an equal basis with others.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Activation and labour market integration supports are implemented in a manner that eliminates welfare traps.*

**Health and well-being: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* People with disabilities can maximise their physical and mental well-being
* Primary care and hospital services are geared to meet the needs of people with disabilities, including any special needs around information, communication, or accessible facilities

***Health and well-being : Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*Access to health and social care is fully responsive to people’s assessed needs.*

*Therapies (speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy) are available in a manner commensurate with identified individual need.*

*People self-direct the spending of state funding provided for supports to the maximum extent possible for each individual.*

**Person-centred disability services: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

Disability services

* support people on a person-by-person basis
* support people to achieve maximum independence
* support people to participate in the everyday life and activities of their community
* Waiting lists for early intervention and therapy services are reduced
* People with disabilities are supported to have inclusive living arrangements in the community in line with a person-centred approach
* Disability services are delivered to quality standards
* People are treated with dignity and respect and are free from abuse

***Person-centred disability services: Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*Respond to the people with disabilities as individuals some of whom require additional supports as distinct from people with disabilities as a specific group/population category.

Move from minimum standards in service provision to enhancing quality of life across all life domains.*

*Self-directed management of funding provided by the State is facilitated to the maximum extent possible for each individual.*

**Housing: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* People with disabilities are supported to live independently in ordinary homes in the community
* New homes being built are designed to Universal Design standards –– in other words disability-friendly design that can be readily adapted to people’s changing needs as they age
* People with disabilities are supported to remain living in their own homes

***Housing: Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB[[3]](#footnote-3)***

*Housing authorities assume full responsibility for the provision of housing to people with an intellectual disability.*

*Housing provision includes whatever supports are appropriate and necessary to ensure that a person can sustain as independent a life as possible.*

**Transport and accessible places: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

People with disabilities can get to where they want to go, including to school, workplace, shopping, appointments, social and sporting activities

***Transport and accessible places: Additional Objective Suggested by the CIB***

*An accessible transport system is available in all parts of the country.[[4]](#footnote-4)*

**Equality and choice: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* Equality before the law, and a right to make your own decisions
* People with disabilities enjoy a reasonable standard of living
* Having a say in decisions that affect you
* Having choice in how you live your life
* Being treated with equality and respect
* Access to information that is easy to follow, and in the format you need

Disability-friendly public services

***Equality and choice: Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*All people with disabilities have access to independent advocacy irrespective of place of residence;*

*People are communicated with in a manner that meets their needs, e.g. Irish Sign Language for those who use this communication method;*

*Respect for individual personhood is at the core of engagement with people;*

*All people with disabilities are enabled to enjoy full legal capacity on an equal basis with others’ (Article 12(2) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities);*

*Access to decision-making supports is available in accordance with the provisions of the Assisted Decision-making (Capacity) Bill 2013;*

*People with disabilities participate fully in all policy decisions affecting them.*

**Joined-up policies and services: Objectives in Phase 2 Consultation Document**

* Different public services work together to ensure seamless services for individuals with disabilities
* People with disabilities, including children and young people, are supported to make transitions from one stage of life to the next
* People with disabilities and the NGOs that represent them are consulted about the way that services are designed and delivered.

***Joined-up policies and services*:  *Additional Objectives Suggested by the CIB****Inter-agency collaboration and joint working are the norm in provision of health and social services and accommodation to people with disabilities.*

*The full integration of people with disabilities into local communities is a cross-cutting goal of all Government agencies and NGOs.*

*Responsibility for providing supports is planned in a manner which addresses changing needs at each point in the life-cycle.*

**Active Social Inclusion: Additional Theme Suggested**

***Active social inclusion: Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*People with disabilities are facilitated to participate fully both socially and economically.*

*Address the three pillars of active social inclusion – adequate income supports, inclusive labour markets, and access to quality services.*

*Develop communities of solidarity at local/neighbourhood level in order to sustain the freedom and independence of each individual with a disability.*

*Develop a research strategy to explore in greater detail what social inclusion involves for different categories of people with disabilities.*

*Provide for the additional ‘costs of disability’ to enable households with a person with disability have an equitable standard of living. [[5]](#footnote-5)

Develop specific poverty and deprivation measurements for households with people with disabilities.*

*Address financial exclusion issues for people with disabilities.*

**Implementing a rights-based approach: Additional Theme Suggested**

***Implementing a rights-based approach: Objectives Suggested by the CIB***

*People with disabilities are regarded and respected as rights-bearing citizens.*

*Each individual with a disability is supported to maximise his/her capacity.*

*People with disabilities are facilitated to lead their lives independently, in a self-determined and autonomous manner.*

*Individuals are enabled to exercise their will and preferences in accordance with their basic right to self-determination.*

*All* p*eople with disabilities (irrespective of mental capacity) are supported to exercise their legal rights.*

1. <http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/publications/social/downloads/Disability_Inclusion_Strategy_June2015.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A Eurofound (2012), *Active inclusion of young people with disabilities or health problems*, study found that young people with health problems or disabilities were currently being missed by both policy and practice; <http://www.astri.nl/media/uploads/files/EF1226EN6.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/report_housing_needs_disability_2007.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/Getting_There_Report_2010.pdf> Citizens Information Board Social Policy Report *Getting There: Transport and Access to Social Services.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For a detailed analysis of the costs of disability, see Cullinan, J. and Lyons, S. (2014), “The Private Economic Costs of Adult Disability” in John Cullinan, Seán Lyons, Brian Nolan (Ed.)*, The Economics of Disability: Insights from Irish Research*. Manchester University Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)