

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

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:

- (i) People with disabilities are people first and foremost and their disability is a secondary factor;
- (ii) The label 'disability' almost certainly masks the individual attributes of each person and their related support needs;
- (iii) 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

¹http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/publications/social/downloads/Disability_Inclusion_Strategy_June2015.pdf

- 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

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.

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>

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 CIB³

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

³ http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/report_housing_needs_disability_2007.pdf

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

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

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*.

- 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

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.

⁵For 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.

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 people with disabilities (irrespective of mental capacity) are supported to exercise their legal rights.