

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. LAWRENCE
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 10th MARCH 2025
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 17th MARCH 2025**

Question

“Will the Minister explain the purpose of the Complex Needs Team within his department and provide details of the following –

- (a) the services provided;
- (b) how the services are accessed;
- (c) whether there is a waiting list for access to those services; and
- (d) the extent of the waiting list if one exists and the actions taken, if any, to reduce it?”

Answer

Purpose

The Complex Needs Team assess disabled children’s needs and provide ongoing support to those likely to need continued support through Adult Social Care.

(a) The services provided

The Complex Needs Team (CNT) provides support to children with the most complex medical and disability needs. The team completes statutory and non-statutory duties including:

1. Child in Need, Preparing for Adulthood or Pathway Plans
2. Child in Need Plans for Specialist Short Breaks
3. Children in need of Protection
4. Children in Care (Article 17, Full Care Order or Short Breaks CiC)

(b) How the services are accessed

Access to services for children are informed by an assessment of a child’s needs. Factors such as the complexity of need, family circumstances and age of the child or young person will be taken into consideration. Referrals will come through the Children & Family hub for a social work assessment. If there are any safeguarding concerns, then this would be via a referral to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub so that a social work assessment can be completed in partnership with all relevant professionals involved with the child/ young person. This assessment would be completed by either the Assessment and Support team or the Complex Needs Team dependent upon the primary concern.

Children eligible for a service from the complex needs team include:

Children who have chronic, permanent and substantial disability.

- Children who have a life-threatening illness.
- Children on the autistic spectrum whose functioning within wider society is severely affected as per the matrix of need.
- Children with disabilities where their care needs cannot be met because their carers

- have a disability themselves.
- Children who have a substantial disability as a result of an accident. This might include severe head injuries following a road traffic accident.
- Children who have a substantial sensory impairment. This might include being blind or deaf, who also have an additional disability.
- Children who require an assessment for specialist short breaks (tier 3)

For young people aged 14+ the team would trigger a referral to adult services as part of initiating the transition process and would complete Preparing for Adulthood assessment (completed within the same timescales as Children and Families assessment). The assessment would trigger a Preparing for Adulthood Plan which are reviewed either every 6 weeks or every 6 months depending on whether they are open for short break only.

(c) Whether there is a waiting list for access to those services

There is a short waiting list for overnight short breaks via Eden House and Oakwell and to access community support via Centrepoint.

There are three children awaiting community support from Homecare via Centrepoint. and limited provision through Centrepoint and the Care Hub.

(d) The extent of the waiting list if one exists and the actions taken, if any, to reduce it?

There are two children currently waiting for overnight short break provision and three children awaiting community support from Homecare via Centrepoint. The waiting list is kept under constant review, and it is anticipated that the wait for overnight breaks reduce in the near future. Since November 2024 the service has commissioned an alternative community resource via Care Hub in order to reduce waiting times and meet demand. The service is continuing to develop its community short break provision in consultation with key stakeholders.