

National Nursing Pilot for Children with Complex Healthcare Needs

Information for Parents/Guardians

Introduction / Overview

The HSE provides public health services in hospitals and communities across the country, including the provision of nursing supports to children to allow them to attend school.

Under a Government pilot to support children with complex healthcare needs to attend school, it is proposed to extend the care hours delivered by HSE-funded Paediatric Home Care Packages (PHCPs) into the school setting. This pilot scheme is open to children already in receipt of 20 or more home nursing hours per week, which must include some hours that are delivered through a PHCP funded by HSE Primary Care.

Many schools, in particular special schools, currently have nurses on site funded through a variety of arrangements. The pilot service will not displace existing nursing services or supports in schools.

The pilot will be led by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). The pilot is to be evaluated and the outcome will inform the provision of nursing support for students with complex healthcare needs into the future.

How is an application made?

Applications for the scheme are made by the school in which the student is enrolled. The school must have the consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) before making an application.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should contact the school to request that an application be made for their child.



Who is eligible to apply under the pilot scheme?

For an application for nursing support to be eligible under the pilot scheme, the following conditions will be applied. The following conditions must be met:

1. The child is enrolled in a recognised school
2. The child requires nursing support in order to attend school as determined by a clinical team
3. The child is currently in receipt 20 or more hours per week home nursing support which must include some hours that are delivered through a Paediatric Home Care Package funded by HSE Primary Care.



Other conditions/constraints are:

4. A child in receipt of 20 or more nursing hours per week which is totally or partially funded by HSE Primary Care, that has attended school within the previous 12 months and, at the time, had sufficient support to allow them attend, is not eligible for nursing support under this scheme.
5. In the case of a student transferring or transitioning from one school to another, a new application is to be made by the new school and the eligibility criteria will apply to the new application. Condition #4 will not apply in this case.

It is seen as essential that existing levels of nursing support provided in schools are maintained in addition to the nursing support provided under the pilot scheme. For an application for nursing support to be eligible under the pilot scheme, the following condition must be met by the school:

6. A school applying under the scheme is required to demonstrate that, at the time of the application, the provision of nursing support by the school has not declined compared to the nursing support provided by the school 12 months previously. Where a decline has taken place, NCSE will not consider an application from the school until such time as the nursing support levels have been restored. Following the restoration of nursing support levels, if the school determines that the available nursing support is not sufficient/appropriate to meet the student's complex healthcare needs, NCSE will then consider a new application from the school.

Communications and support

For further information and to discuss eligibility, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should contact the HSE Key Worker supporting the healthcare needs of their child and/or their local NCSE Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO), whose details are available on [the relevant page on the NCSE website](#).