

National Nursing Pilot for Children with Complex Healthcare Needs

Summary Information for Schools

Introduction

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 will be available 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.

Overview of the Programme

This will be a nationwide pilot scheme, with applications accepted from recognised schools.

HSE Primary Care provides a home nursing service to children that have healthcare and/or nursing needs that cannot be met by standard Primary Care services and social services. This home nursing service is delivered through an individual Paediatric Home Care Package (PHCP), involving the provision of a contracted number of hours by a preferred private healthcare providers (“Preferred Providers”) procured by the HSE through a framework contract.

The pilot nursing scheme will, for eligible students and schools, extend the PHCP from the home into the school setting. This will allow a Preferred Provider nurse attend school with the student for an agreed number of hours per week, and travel to and from school with them, if necessary.



An application and assessment process will confirm the eligibility of the student for the scheme, determine the number of hours to support the student, assess any necessary environmental changes, and confirm whether funding is available for their nursing support hours. A transition and ongoing review process will facilitate the student's transition into school and monitor their progress.

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.

Applications process

The application involves the recording of special categories of personal data as defined under Article 9 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). As such, documents should be circulated and filed with care. Electronic versions of forms containing personal data will be password protected by default.

Applications for the scheme are made by the school in which the student is enrolled. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to contact the school to request that an application be made for their child.



A password-protected application form will be provided to the school by their SENO in respect of each individual application.

The school must have the consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) before making an application.

The application form contains three sections, all of which must be completed before submission. The school is responsible for coordinating the completion of the form:

- Section A: for completion by school
- Section B: for completion by HSE
- Section C: for completion by parent/guardian.

This form is to be submitted electronically and in signed hardcopy for a valid application to be made.

i. Electronic submission:

All sections should be completed electronically. There is no need for images of signatures to be pasted in the form. Once the form is completed, the password-protected form should be emailed to:

NursingSupport@NCSE.ie

ii. Signed hardcopy submission:

The electronic version of the form should be printed and the hardcopy signed by the school, HSE and parent(s)/guardians(s). The signed hardcopy should be posted to:

Nursing Support Team, National Council for Special Education, Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1, D01 K0Y8

Scanned copies of the signed form should not be emailed.

Applications are processed by NCSE and HSE in the following manner:

- NCSE assesses the application for completeness and eligibility
- HSE carries out an assessment of the student's nursing needs and a risk assessment of the school environment
- Healthcare planning meetings are held between the school, HSE, NCSE and parent(s)/guardian(s)
- A nursing support funding assessment is made by NCSE
- The proposed nursing support is assessed under HSE governance procedures.

Communication in relation to the application and assessment process will be managed centrally by NCSE.

If the application is successful NCSE will contact the school to provide information on the next steps. HSE and NCSE will engage with the school to support the transition of the child.

Key Points of Information

Applications will be accepted only for children enrolled in a recognised school.

Applications for the nursing scheme are made by the school on behalf of the child. Applications must be submitted electronically by email, and in hardcopy by post. The hardcopy must be signed by the school, HSE and parent(s)/guardian(s) to be eligible.

The HSE Key Worker responsible for managing the healthcare needs of the child will undertake a school risk assessment to ensure the school safely meets the healthcare needs of the child. This assessment will be made in consultation with the school, nurse manager and parents, taking into account the child's clinical care needs.

Management, supervision and governance of the agency nurse will be through a nurse manager, employed by the Preferred Provider, and contracted by the HSE. The nurse will not be employed by the school. The nurse will be responsible for providing necessary medical supplies.

Communications and support

Communications with schools in relation to the pilot scheme will be coordinated by a single point of contact available at NursingSupport@NCSE.ie, or the local SENO at relevant stages in the process. For SENO contact information, please consult [the relevant page on the NCSE website](#). The SENO will provide further information about eligibility, applications and later steps in the process.

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