

Neurorehabilitation Inequalities **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/116394>)**

Neurorehabilitation inequalities – a quarter of adults with neurological conditions have never been able to access essential services

- NAI survey finds critical gaps in neurorehabilitation services across the country-

'The government's slow response on neurorehabilitation services is creating a postcode lottery and exacerbating health inequalities for those most in need.' That's according to the [Neurological Alliance of Ireland \(https://www.nai.ie/\)](https://www.nai.ie/) (NAI) which will launch their Budget 2026 submission at an event in Buswells Hotel, Dublin, attended by elected members from across affected health regions.

TDs in attendance at today's event will hear that gaps in neurorehabilitation services mean that a quarter of those surveyed for, 'The Right Care in the Right Place: Access to Services for People with Neurological Conditions Across Ireland,' report have never been able to access neurorehabilitation.

A high proportion of the 700 individuals who responded to the survey also reported being unable to access neurorehabilitation services in the past 12 months

- 78% in the North West
- 73% in the South East
- 58% in the Midlands
- 62% in Dublin

In its pre-budget submission, the NAI is calling for investment in 4 community neurorehabilitation teams in these regions in order to deliver on the Programme for Government commitment to complete the rollout of community neuro-rehabilitation teams across the country. The North West, South East, North Dublin and the Midlands have received no funding to date for teams promised in the 2019 National Implementation Framework for the Neuro-rehabilitation Strategy.

The Neurological Alliance is also seeking funding for the provision of 45 regional inpatient neuro-rehabilitation beds across the South West and Midlands regions to begin to deliver on the Programme for Government commitment to tackle the national shortfall of 175 beds nationwide.

Magdalen Rogers, Executive Director of the NAI, welcomed the recommitment to deliver on promised neurorehabilitation services in the Programme for Government published this year, however she says that the longer the government falls short on its responsibility to patients, the greater the inequalities experiences across the country.

Ms Rogers said: "The importance of community neurorehabilitation teams cannot be understated. The specialist service and care they deliver within the community for people with a wide range of neurological conditions is proven to reduce hospital stays by an average of three days per patient. These teams also play a critical role in avoiding further admissions to hospitals and long-term care.

"In 2019, the government committed to funding nine community rehabilitation teams. To date only five of those regional teams have been delivered and there remains gaps within those services. The 2019 Framework also committed to creating 306 neurorehabilitation beds. A 2024 HSE report found there is a continued shortfall of 175 beds nationwide.

"The results of our own survey, which we'll be sharing with TDs today, highlights the reality of these gaps in neurorehabilitation. Behind these percentages is the reality of thousands of people throughout Ireland being denied the right to rehabilitation enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities".

Patient advocate and NAI board member, Eamon McPartlin is from Co. Leitrim, which falls within the Northwest region. Eamon was diagnosed with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) in 2021. He explained the importance of access to neurorehabilitation teams: "For those living with a neurological condition, multidisciplinary treatment is so important including neurophysiotherapy, psychology and speech and language therapy – and for many they cannot receive this treatment locally, they're having to travel huge distances to access the health care they need and are entitled to receive.

"When you consider the costs of that travel and accommodation, the significant time they and their family might need to take off work, the impact of that regional inequality grows and grows. I know that from speaking to others, the consequences of living with a neurological condition can be even more difficult to deal with than the condition itself.

“In many parts of the country, for those living with a neurological condition a community neurorehabilitation team may be their only option to access the services they urgently need to support them in living a better quality of life.”

The NAI represents over thirty charities advocating for the rights of over 860,000 people in Ireland living with a neurological condition.

For more information, visit www.nai.ie (<http://www.nai.ie>).

Region

Nationwide

[More Information \(https://www.nai.ie/\)](https://www.nai.ie/)

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