

## PRESS RELEASE

5<sup>th</sup> March 2025

### **Just two partially staffed community neurorehabilitation teams in place despite nine promised in 2019**

*NAI calls on government to commit to delivering on overdue Neurorehabilitation Strategy in first 100 days*

Six years on from the government commitment to deliver nine fully funded community neurological rehabilitation teams across the country, the rollout has been beset by delays, with most areas of the country still without any access to a community neurorehabilitation team.

That's according to the Neurological Alliance of Ireland, the national umbrella body for over 30 neurological organisations, who will meet with TDs and Senators today (05.02.25) at Leinster House, to call for their renewed commitment in delivering on the targets outlined in the 2019 Neurorehabilitation Strategy.

The National Neurorehabilitation Strategy published in 2019 committed to delivering specialist community teams and long-term neurorehabilitation services across the country, as well as addressing the shortfall of 171 specialist inpatient neurorehabilitation beds.

Magdalen Rogers, CEO of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland said: "Neurorehabilitation is a vital service to enable people with neurological conditions to live their day to day lives. We're calling on the Government to announcement a commitment to funding four community neurorehabilitation teams in this years Budget. We want to see this commitment during their first 100 days in office, to send a clear signal they intend to deliver on the pledges within the Programme for Government to complete the national rollout of community neurorehabilitation teams, developing more specialist inpatient rehabilitation beds and implement community based multidisciplinary rehabilitation services in each HSE Regional Health Authority Area".

NAI is calling for funding in the upcoming Budget for full community neurorehabilitation teams for the North West, North Dublin, South East and Midlands, promised since 2019.

**Patient advocate and NAI board member, Eamon McPartlin** from Leitrim, explained the importance of access to neurorehabilitation teams.

"I was diagnosed with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) in 2021, although symptoms actually began to appear a lot earlier in my thirties. Even before I received my diagnoses, the condition led to me having to give up my work as an engineer and ultimately to my marriage ending and 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.

"Accessing multidisciplinary treatment including physiotherapy, psychology and occupational therapy through community neurorehabilitation teams, without having to travel huge distances is vital. It allows people living with a neurological condition to receive treatment locally without they or their family having to take significant time off work or spend lots of money on travelling and accommodation. For some depending on where they live in the country the 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.

Representatives at the briefing also heard from **Bernadette Myler Driscoll, a patient advocate in the South East**, who highlighted the lack of funding for the community rehabilitation team in the area. Her mother has Lewy Body dementia and Parkinson's Disease, while her husband was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Bernadette organizes weekly social and physical activity meetups for people with neurological conditions and their carers, in Waterford and Kilkenny.

She said:

"My mother started running coffee mornings, chair yoga, and meditation events 20 years ago with my support. Since she became unwell, I've continued them because social connection is vital. Many say the worst part of these conditions is loneliness as mobility, communication skills, and confidence decline. We rely on fundraising and volunteers with lived experience to keep these events running.

"With an ageing population and rising diagnoses, support cannot depend on volunteers alone. It must be structured, nationwide, and delivered through essential community teams."

For more information visit: [www.nai.ie](http://www.nai.ie)

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors**

- 1. Of the Nine Community Neurorehabilitation Teams the government committed to establishing in 2019:**
  - Three have not received any funding to date, (Midlands, North Dublin and South East) while
  - The North West team has only 3 posts funded compared to the 12 that should be in place.
  - Four teams are due to be established in 2025, for Cork/Kerry, Galway, Wicklow/South Dublin and West Dublin/Kildare
  - The ninth team (Mid West) is due to get an uplift from 7 posts to the required 12 in 2025
- 2. Images from the event, taken by Marc O' Sullivan, will be issued at 12pm on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025.**

## **Spokespersons available for media interviews:**

- Mags Rogers, Executive Director at the NAI;
- **Eamon Mc Partlin, Patient Advocate and board member at the NAI**

## **About the Neurological Alliance of Ireland**

The Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) brings together over thirty non profit organisations to advocate for the rights of the over 860,000 people in Ireland living with a neurological condition.

Founded in 2003, the NAI advocates for the development of quality services for people with neurological conditions. Our campaigns are rooted in the experience of our members and the

people and families with whom they work. We provide a united and expert voice on neurological care through advocacy, policy development and awareness raising.

### **Neurorehabilitation Strategy**

The neurorehabilitation strategy in Ireland is a national policy aimed at providing high-quality, person-centered neurorehabilitation services across the care pathway. The Implementation Framework for the strategy was published in 2019.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/neurorehabilitation/>