



Department of Social and Family Affairs

Minister Mary Coughlan Launches C mhairle Report "Developing An Advocacy Service For People With Disabilities"

Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Social and Family Affairs today launched the C mhairle report "Developing an Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities" which was commissioned from Goodbody Economic Consultants.

The report will provide vital information for C mhairle in planning for the introduction and future development of an appropriate advocacy service for people with disabilities, said Minister Coughlan.

"The context for this report is the Government's agenda to improving services for people with disabilities," Minister Coughlan said.

"I am preparing a new C mhairle (Amendment) Bill, the purpose of which is to facilitate the introduction of a new personal advocacy service, which will be administered by C mhairle.

"I believe that the position of people with disabilities will be improved significantly through the introduction of the new personal advocacy service. This new service will provide for the assignment of a personal advocate to a person with a disability who is unable or who has difficulty in obtaining a social service without the assistance or support of the personal advocate.

"The main function of the personal advocate will be to assist, support and represent the person with a disability in applying for and obtaining a social service and also in pursuing any right of review or appeal in connection with that service," said Minister Coughlan.

"C mhairle already has a statutory remit in supporting the provision of independent information, advice and advocacy services in relation to the broad range of social services."



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“There is an important link between the provision of information and advocacy in that access to information and a range of options flowing from that information are two key aspects of empowerment. That is particularly relevant in the case of people with disabilities for whom Cómhairle has a specific remit.”

“I am confident this report, in addition to contributing to a deeper understanding of advocacy services in the Irish context, will be of enormous assistance to Cómhairle in planning for the introduction and future development of appropriate advocacy services, ” said Minister Coughlan.

Minister Coughlan added that of the Department of Social and Family Affairs’ total expenditure this year of 11.2 billion euro, some 2 billion euro will go on schemes and services relating to illness, disability and caring.

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