

**The aim of this leaflet is to explain the role of the Family Representative and what work it involves.**

The role requires a person to be a voice for a broad range of family experiences within their Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT). They must also be able to represent views that may not be the same as their own. The term for this role is **two years**.

The Family Representative will:

- Represent their Family Forum by expressing their views, concerns, and suggestions for improvements.
- Represent all issues and ideas raised by families discussed at the Family Forum.
- Ensure there is feedback to families about issues and ideas raised.
- Act with integrity, avoid conflicts of interest and be worthy of the trust invested in the role by ensuring that all decisions are made solely in the interests of the children and young people and their families.
- Prepare for, and participate fully in, meetings, planning sessions and reviews.

**What is the time commitment for this work?**

- The role will require a significant time commitment to prepare for and attend:
  - Family Forum meetings for your CDNT (approx. 3 a year)
  - Family Representative Group meetings in the area (4-5 in the year).
  - Meetings with your local Children's Disability Network Manager (CDNM) (a maximum of 6 in the year, for a meeting before and after each of the Family Forums).
- If selected to represent the Family Representative Group on the Children's Disability Team Governance Group, there will also be 2 to 4 additional meetings to attend. The two selected representatives will be involved in the decision-making at the Governance Group and represent the 'expert by experience' viewpoint for families.

**What is the role of the Family Representative at their local Family Forum?**

To act as a chairperson for the meeting, and:

- Set the agenda.
- Liaise with the independent facilitator and the CDNM in planning the agenda and process for the Family Forum.
- Agree actions arising from the Family Forum.
- Agree main themes to carry forward to the Family Representative Group.
- Provide feedback to the Family Forum from the Family Representative Group.

**Who will send out the invites for the Family Forum meetings?**

CDNT administration will manage this.

**How will the meetings work?**

An independent facilitator will be present at all meetings. The agenda and process for the Family Forum will be agreed in advance with the independent facilitator. The facilitator will

work through this agenda at the meeting and will summarise the points discussed at the end to ensure a shared understanding within the group.

### When will the meetings happen?

This will depend on what suits each Family Forum. For some groups, evenings suit best; for other groups, mornings are best, or even a mixture of both. It will be up to the Family Forum itself to decide.

### Who will send out the minutes after the meetings?

CDNT administration will manage this also.

### What is the Family Representative Group?

- This is a group with 2 Family Representatives from each CDNT's Family Forum. There are 11 CDNTs in the Dublin South, Kildare, and West Wicklow area.
- An independent facilitator will work with the Group to support them in their aims.
- The representatives will raise issues, share concerns, and identify priorities that are emerging in their local Family Forums.
- The Family Representative Group will nominate 2 people to sit on the Children's Disability Network Governance Group.

### Who will be at the Governance Group meetings?

The CEOs of lead agencies (CRC, Enable Ireland, KARE and Stewarts Care) and non-lead agencies (Cheeverstown, Muiriosa and St John of God), as well as the Head of Disability Services HSE; Head of Service Primary Care; Head of Service Mental Health; two CDNM representatives; and two Family Representatives.

### How do you become a Family Representative?

- The vote will take place at our next Family Forum meeting, which is on **Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024**.
- Two representatives will be elected from those who have nominated themselves. The election will be conducted by the independent facilitator.
- Where more than 2 people express interest in becoming Family Representatives, the Family Forum will be asked to vote for their representatives of choice.
- Nominees will be given 2-3 minutes each to tell the Family Forum why they would like to become a Family Representative.
- Only those present at the meeting will be able to vote.