

Elected Representative letter template:

Dear Deputy

I am a voter in your constituency and I would like to raise the current situation facing the organisation Inclusion Ireland - the National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability. Inclusion Ireland has had a cut in core funding of 20% imposed for 2019 from the Health Service Executive (HSE) and no commitment or assurance on funding for 2020.

This cut will have a significant impact on the advocacy, information, support, legislative and policy work of the organisation along with the vital grassroots development of ensuring that people with intellectual disabilities and families have their voices heard and their rights upheld. Despite ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability (UNCRPD), people with intellectual disabilities are still marginalised, institutionalised and discriminated against in Ireland.

Inclusion Ireland has a track record of being involved in achieving significant positive change for people with intellectual disabilities, particularly in the areas of Assisted Decision Making, Standards for Residential Services, Cost of Disability research and personalised budgets - all of which Inclusion Ireland campaigned for.

However, many people with intellectual disabilities are still living in institutions, not having their rights upheld. This is backed up by recent HIQA reports illustrating the rights restrictions people with intellectual disabilities experience in institutional settings. This highlights the need for advocacy supports and the importance of organisations such as Inclusion Ireland holding the state accountable for human rights abuses.

I believe it is vital that Inclusion Ireland, as the only representative organisation for adults and children with an intellectual disability, must continue to be funded and supported to advocate for the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families.

As an elected representative I ask you to raise the matter directly with the Minister for Health; Simon Harris and the Minister of State for Disability Issues; Finian McGrath to reverse this funding cut to Inclusion Ireland.

Yours sincerely,