



Pre-Budget Submission 2025

Ask 1

Provide increased state funding for Parkinson's Ireland nurse specialists and other services, such as speech therapy



Parkinson's Ireland (PI) is calling on the government to address the increasing rate of Parkinson's Disease (PD), by increasing the funding it provides to PI, and by investing further in neurological care services within the HSE.

PI provides vital services within the community for people with PD and those affected by PD. These services such as providing access to PD nurse specialists, speech and language therapy, and physiotherapy are crucial in preventing hospitalisations and aiding in long-term rehabilitation after a hospital stay.

Ask 2

Provide equal access to a Community Neurorehabilitation Team across the country



PD is the second most common neurodegenerative disease. It currently affects approximately 1% of people over the age of 60. The rate of PD is projected to double by 2040. The need for further services will increase rapidly over the coming years.

PI received less than 10% of its income from the state in 2023. PI generates the remaining 90% of its income from fundraising and voluntary donations. This is not sustainable, as the number of people that are newly diagnosed with PD continues to increase.

Ask 3

Increase the number of consultant neurologists in Ireland, starting with providing access to consultant neurologists in 5 regional hospitals



PI also recognises the inequality in care experienced by people with PD across Ireland. This is highlighted by the UCC audit report on the quality of care received by people with PD e.g. lack of access to nurse specialists in some areas and the need to have equal access to a Community Neurorehabilitation Team across the country.

https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/research/centreforgerontologyandrehabilitation/2014newsarticles/NationalauditofmovementdisordersservicesREPORT_April2024.pdf



Ask 1: Provide increased state funding for PI nurse specialists and other services, such as speech therapy

The main service that PI provides is its specialist nurse services which includes its free-phone helpline and weekly zoom workshops.

PD nurses are quite limited and are located mainly in Dublin. For example, there are currently no PD nurses in Cork and Kerry.

Staggeringly, just 57% of patients in this audit had documentation of accessing a PD nurse specialist. In the UK, the findings of their 2022 audit found that 95% of patients have such access. The NICE Standards state that all adults with Parkinson's should have a point of contact with specialist nurses. The UK are largely meeting this standard, but Ireland is falling way short.

Currently there are 12 PD nurses within the HSE, for the whole country. Ireland should have upwards of 35 according to NICE guidance.

The recent UCC audit report also found that multidisciplinary input is generally poor for people with PD, especially dietetics and social work input. For example, only 8% of people with PD have access to a dietitian and only 9% have access to counselling.

PI currently provides an array of services in these areas but needs sustainable government funding to sustain and expand these services to meet growing demand.

Ask 2: Provide equal access to a Community Neurorehabilitation Team across the country

PI supports the ask of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland for funding for community neurorehabilitation teams in each of the nine CHOs around the country. These teams will provide short-term intensive rehabilitation for people with PD to support their recovery. The multidisciplinary services include physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy.

These teams need to be fully funded in every area and recruitment needs to take place as soon as possible.

Ask 3: Increase the number of consultant neurologists in Ireland, starting with providing access to consultant neurologists in 5 regional hospitals

PI supports the Neurological Alliance of Ireland ask for funding for Consultant Neurologists in 5 regional hospitals: Bantry, Letterkenny, Mayo, Portlaoise and Wexford.

In addition, the number of neurologists overall needs to increase. The recent UCC audit report also shows that 60% of people were diagnosed privately, with very long waiting lists in the public system. This needs to be addressed urgently as the rate of PD increases.

Member of:

Disability Federation of Ireland, Neurological Alliance of Ireland, Parkinson's Europe, Care Alliance Ireland, Charities Institute Ireland, Health Research Charities Ireland, The Wheel.

National Office:

Carmichael House, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7, D07 RHA8, Ireland.

Freephone Helpline: 1 800 359 359

Tel: 00 353 1 872 2234 **Fax:** 00 353 1 872 5540

Email: nationaloffice@parkinsons.ie **Web:** www.parkinsons.ie

Parkinson's Ireland is a company limited by guarantee.

Company Number 123532. CHY No: CHY10816. RCN 20028237.

Registered address as shown.