**Role of Family Representatives**

**What is it?**

Family Representatives are signing up to the principles and values of the CDNT programme and services.

The Family Representative role requires a person to be a voice for a broad range of family experiences specific to the Children’s Disability Network Team. They must also be able to represent views that may not be the same as their own.

The Family Representative will.

• Represent their Family Forum by expressing their views, concerns and suggestions for improvements, based on grouping of general areas and themes from the family forum.

• Represent all issues and ideas raised by families

• Ensure there is feedback to families about issues and ideas raised and resulting actions

**Characteristics of a successful family representative**

* Is your child accessing or waiting for a children’s disability service?
* Are you respectful of others and their perspectives?
* Are you comfortable speaking in a group and interacting with others?
* Are you a good listener?
* Are you able to use your personal experience constructively?
* Can you see beyond your own experience?
* Are you non-judgemental?
* Have you a positive attitude?
* Are you able to work collaboratively with a group?
* Have you an interest in expanding your knowledge and skills?
* Have you a desire to bring about meaningful change?
* Can you maintain confidentiality of service user and organisational information?

**What is involved?**

Two Family Representatives will be elected at the Family Forum meeting. They will remain in the role for a period to be decided by the Family Forum.

The role will require a significant time commitment to prepare for and attend.

• All Family Forum meetings for your Children’s Disability Network Team (around 4 per year)

• All Family Representative Group meetings in the area (around 4 per year)

In addition, Family Representatives in the area will nominate two members of the Family Representative Group to attend meetings with the Operational Management Group and Children’s Disability Network Governance Group.

This will ensure that all meetings will be attended by two Family Representatives.

Family Representatives will raise issues for discussion and resolution at the appropriate levels of the governance structure.

**Terms of Reference for the Family Representatives Group**

* For the 2 elected Family Representatives from each network in the CHO to learn and share feedback from the different Family Forums
* To co-ordinate attendance of two-Family Representative Group members at each CHO Children’s Disability Networks Governance Group meeting
* 2 Representatives of the Family Representative Group to meet with the CDNMs Operational Management Group no less than four times per year.
* To raise issues for discussion and resolution at appropriate levels of the governance structure
* To develop a feedback template for feedback to the family forums

**What supports will you have?**

The Family Representatives will be supported by an Independent Facilitator at the Family Forum and Family Representative Group meetings. They will have help to prepare and participate in meetings and design a template to feedback to their Family Forum. CDNMs should ensure that Family Representatives are given an information pack as part of their induction to the role, to include for example, the Governance Policy, relevant PDS documents and National CDNT Policies. This will have all the relevant documentation to fulfil their role.

Family Representatives should be reimbursed travel and subsistence, and vouched receipts in line with HSE Policy[**https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/person-family-engagement/resourcesqid/policy-for-the-reimbursement-of-service-user-expenses-2017.pdF**](https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/person-family-engagement/resourcesqid/policy-for-the-reimbursement-of-service-user-expenses-2017.pdF%20)